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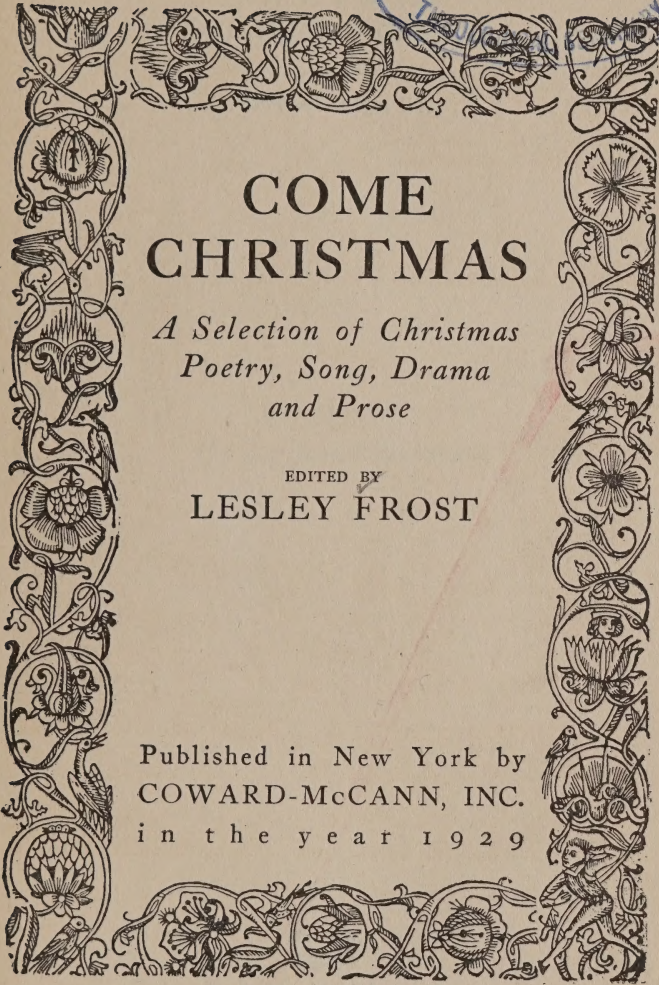
COME  
CHRISTMAS



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# COME CHRISTMAS

*A Selection of Christmas  
Poetry, Song, Drama  
and Prose*

EDITED BY  
LESLEY FROST

Published in New York by  
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in the year 1929



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*Printed in the U. S. A.*

TO ELINOR  
*On her first Christmas*





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COME  
CHRISTMAS





## “NOWELL”

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day  
To Britaigne tooké they the righté way,—  
Aurelius and this magicien bisyde,  
And been descended ther they wolde abyde;  
And this was, as thise bookés me remembre,  
The coldé, frosty sesoun of Decembre.  
Phebus wox old, and hewéd lyk latoun,  
That in his hooté declynacioun  
Shoon as the burnéd gold, with stremés brighte;  
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,  
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.  
The bittré frostes with the sleet and reyn  
Destroyéd hath the grene in every yerd:  
Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,  
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn;  
Biforn hym stant brawn of the tuskéd swyn,  
And “*Nowel*” crieth every lusty man.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

*The Frankeleyns Tale.*

*THE MAHOGANY TREE*

Christmas is here;  
Winds whistle shrill,  
Icy and chill,  
Little care we:  
Little we fear  
Weather without,  
Sheltered about  
The mahogany tree.

Once on the boughs,  
Birds of rare plume  
Sang, in its bloom;  
Night-birds are we:  
Here we carouse  
Singing, like them,  
Perched round the stem  
Of the jolly old tree.

Here let us sport,  
Boys, as we sit;  
Laughter and wit  
Flashing so free.  
Life is but short—  
When we are gone,  
Let them sing on,  
Round the old tree.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Evenings we knew,  
Happy as this;  
Faces we miss,  
Pleasant to see.  
Kind hearts and true,  
Gentle and just,  
Peace to your dust!  
We sing round the tree.

Care, like a dun,  
Lurks at the gate:  
Let the dog wait:  
Happy we'll be!  
Drink every one;  
Pile up the coals,  
Fill the red bowls,  
Round the old tree!

Drain we the cup.—  
Friend, art afraid?  
Spirits are laid  
In the Red Sea.  
Mantle it up;  
Empty it yet;  
Let us forget,  
Round the old tree.

Sorrows, begone!  
Life and its ills,  
Duns and their bills,  
Bid we to flee.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Come with the dawn,  
Blue-devil sprite,  
Leave us to-night,  
Round the old tree.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

## *BALLADE OF CHRISTMAS GHOSTS*

Between the moonlight and the fire,  
In winter twilights long ago,  
What ghosts we raised for your desire,  
To make your merry blood run slow;  
How old, how grave, how wise we grow,  
No Christmas ghost can make us chill,  
Save those that troop in mournful row,  
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

The beasts can talk in barn and byre,  
On Christmas Eve, old legends know,  
As year by year the years retire;  
We men fall silent then, I trow;  
Such sights hath memory to show,  
Such voices from the silence thrill,  
Such shapes return with Christmas snow—  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

Oh, children of the village choir,  
Your carols on the midnight throw;  
Oh, bright across the mist and mire,  
Ye ruddy hearths of Christmas, glow!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Beat back the dread, beat down the woe,  
Let's cheerily descend the hills;  
Be welcome all, to come or go,  
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

## ENVOY

Friend, sursum corda, soon and slow  
We part like guests, who've joyed their fill;  
Forget them not, nor mourn them so,  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

ANDREW LANG



## HOLLY SONG

Blow, blow, thou winter winde,  
Thou art not so unkinde,  
As mans ingratitude



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thy tooth is not so keene,  
Because thou art not seene,  
Although thy breath be rude.

*Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, unto the greene holly,  
Most frendship is fayning; most Loving, meere  
folly:*

*Then heigh ho, the holly,  
This Life is most jolly.*

Freize, freize, thou bitter skie  
That dost not bight so nigh  
As benefitts forgot:

Though thou the waters warpe,  
Thy sting is not so sharpe,  
As freind remembred not.

*Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, unto the greene holly,  
Most friendship is fayning; most Loving, meere  
folly:*

*Then heigh ho, the holly,  
This Life is most jolly.*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## OLD CHRISTMAS RETURNED

All you that to feasting and mirth are inclined,  
Come, here is good news for to pleasure your mind,  
Old Christmas is come for to keep open house,  
He scorns to be guilty of starving a mouse:  
Then come, boys, and welcome for diet the chief,  
Plum-puddings, goose, capon, minced pies, and  
roast beef.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The holly and ivy about the walls wind  
And show that we ought to our neighbors be kind,  
Inviting each other for pastime and sport,  
And where we best fare, there we most do resort;  
We fail not of victuals, and that of the chief,  
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minced pies, and  
roast beef.

All travellers, as they do pass on their way,  
At gentlemen's halls are invited to stay,  
Themselves to refresh, and their horses to rest,  
Since that he must be Old Christmas's guest;  
Nay, the poor shall not want, but have for relief,  
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minced pies, and  
roast beef. Old Carol

### *CEREMONIES FOR CHRISTMAS*

Come, bring with a noise,  
My merry, merry boys,  
The Christmas log to the firing,  
While my good dame, she  
Bids ye all be free,  
And drink to your heart's desiring.

With the last year's brand  
Light the new block, and  
For good success in his spending,  
On your psalteries play,  
That sweet luck may  
Come while the log is a-tending.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Drink now the strong beer,  
Cut the white loaf here,  
The while the meat is a-shredding;  
For the rare mince-pie,  
And the plums stand by,  
To fill the paste that's a-kneading.

ROBERT HERRICK

### *GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASSAIL*

Wassail, Wassail, all over the town!  
Our toast it is white, and our ale it is brown,  
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

So here is to Cherry and to his right cheek,  
Pray God send our master a good piece of beef,  
And a good piece of beef that may we all see;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

And here is to Dobbin and to his right eye,  
Pray God send our master a good Christmas pie,  
And a good Christmas pie that may we all see;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

So here is to Broad May and to her broad horn,  
May God send our master a good crop of corn,  
And a good crop of corn that may we all see;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear,  
Pray God send our master a happy New Year,  
And a happy New Year as e'er he did see;  
With our wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

And here is to Colly and to her long tail,  
Pray God send our master he never may fail  
A bowl of strong beer; I pray you draw near,  
And our jolly wassail it's then you shall hear.

Come, butler, come fill us a bowl of the best,  
Then we hope that your soul in heaven may rest;  
But if you do draw us a bowl of the small,  
Then down shall go butler, bowl and all.

Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock,  
Who tripped to the door and slipped back the lock!  
Who tripped to the door and pulled back the pin,  
For to let these jolly wassailers in.

Traditional

### *MR. WARDLE'S CAROL*

I care not for Spring; on his fickle wing  
Let the blossoms and buds be borne:  
He woos them amain with his treacherous rain,  
And he scatters them ere the morn.  
An inconstant elf, he knows not himself,  
Or his own changing mind an hour,  
He'll smile in your face, and with wry grimace,  
He'll wither your youngest flower.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Let the Summer sun to his bright home run,  
He shall never be sought by me;  
When he's dimmed by a cloud I can laugh aloud,  
And care not how sulky he be;  
For his darling child is the madness wild  
That sports in fierce fever's train;  
And when love is too strong, it don't last long  
As many have found to their pain.

A mild harvest night, by the tranquil light  
Of the modest and gentle moon,  
Has a far sweeter sheen for me, I ween,  
Than the broad and unblushing moon.  
But every leaf awakens my grief,  
As it lies beneath the tree;  
So let Autumn air be never so fair,  
It by no means agrees with me.

But my song I troll out, for Christmas stout,  
The hearty, the true, and the bold;  
A bumper I drain, and with might and main  
Give three cheers for this Christmas old.  
We'll usher him in with a merry din  
That shall gladden his joyous heart,  
And we'll keep him up while there's bite or sup,  
And in fellowship good we'll part.

In his fine honest pride, he scorns to hide  
One jot of his hard-weather scars;  
They're no disgrace, for there's much the same  
trace



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

On the cheeks of our bravest tars.  
Then again I sing till the roof doth ring,  
And it echoes from wall to wall—  
To the stout old wight, fair welcome to-night,  
As the King of the Seasons all!

CHARLES DICKENS

### *WITHIN AND WITHOUT*

Within the hall are song and laughter,  
The cheeks of Christmas red and jolly,  
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter  
    With lightsome green of ivy and holly;  
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide  
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring hide;  
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap  
    And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;  
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,  
    Hunted to death in its galleries blind;  
And swift little troops of silent sparks,  
    Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,  
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks  
    Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,  
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,  
    And rattles and wrings  
    The icy strings,  
Singing, in dreary monotone,  
A Christmas carol of its own,

## C O M E    C H R I S T M A S

Whose burden still, as he might guess,  
Was—"Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"  
The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch  
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,  
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night  
The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,  
Through the window-slits of the castle old,  
Build out its piers of ruddy light  
Against the drift of the cold.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

### *SIGNS OF THE SEASON*

An' ev'ry oone wull tell his tiale,  
An' ev'ry oone wull zing his zong,  
An' ev'ry oone wull drink his yal,  
To love an' frien'ship al night long.

We'll snap the tongs, we'll have a bal,  
We'll shiak the house, we'll rise the ruf,  
We'll romp an' miake the maidens squal,  
A catchen o'm at bline-man's buff.

Zoo come to marra night, an' mind  
Don't leave thy fiddle-bag behind.  
We'll shiake a lag, an' drink a cup  
O' yal to kip wold Chris'mas up.

WILLIAM BARNES

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## FROM FAR AWAY

From far away we come to you.

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door.*

To tell of great tidings, strange and true.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

From far away we come to you,

To tell of great tidings, strange and true.

For as we wandered far and wide,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*

What hap do you deem there should us betide?

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

Under a bent when the night was deep,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*

There lay three shepherds, tending their sheep.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“O ye shepherds, what have ye seen,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*

To stay your sorrow and heal your teen?”

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“In an ox stall this night we saw,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*

A Babe and a maid without a flaw.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“There was an old man there beside;

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*  
His hair was white, and his hood was wide.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“And as we gazed this thing upon,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*  
Those twain knelt down to the little one.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

“And a marvellous song we straight did hear,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*  
That slew our sorrow and healed our care.”

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

News of a fair and marvellous thing,

*The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,*  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, we sing.

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.*

Old English Carol

## KING WITLAF'S DRINKING-HORN

Witlaf, a king of the Saxons,

Ere yet his last he breathed,

To the merry monks of Croyland

His drinking-horn bequeathed,—

That, whenever they sat at their revels,

And drank from the golden bowl,

They might remember the donor,

And breathe a prayer for his soul.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

So sat they once at Christmas,  
And bade the goblet pass;  
In their beards the red wine glistened  
Like dew-drops in the glass.

They drank to the soul of Witlaf,  
They drank to Christ the Lord,  
And to each of the Twelve Apostles,  
Who had preached His holy word.

They drank to the Saints and Martyrs  
Of the dismal days of yore,  
And as soon as the horn was empty  
They remembered one Saint more.

And the reader droned from the pulpit,  
Like the murmur of many bees,  
The legend of good Saint Guthlac,  
And Saint Basil's homilies;

Till the great bells of the convent,  
From their prison in the tower,  
Guthlac and Bartholomæus,  
Proclaimed the midnight hour.

And the Yule-log cracked in the chimney  
And the Abbot bowed his head,  
And the flamelets flapped and flickered  
And the Abbot was stark and dead.

Yet still in his pallid fingers  
He clutched the golden bowl,  
In which, like a pearl dissolving,  
Had sunk and dissolved his soul.



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

But not for this their revels  
The jovial monks forbore,  
For they cried, "Fill high the goblet!  
We must drink to one Saint more."  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

### *KING ARTHUR'S WAES-HAEL*

Waes-hael for knight and dame!  
O merry be their dole!  
Drink-hael! in Jesu's name  
We fill the tawny bowl;  
But cover down the curving crest,  
Mould of the Orient Lady's breast.

Waes-hael! yet lift no lid:  
Drain ye the reeds for wine.  
Drink-hael! the milk was hid  
That soothed that Babe divine;  
Hush'd, as this hollow channel flows,  
He drew the balsam from the rose.

Waes-hael! thus glow'd the breast  
Where a God yearn'd to cling;  
Drink-hael! so Jesu press'd  
Life from its mystic spring;  
Then hush and bend in reverent sign,  
And breathe the thrilling reeds for wine.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Waes-hael! in shadowy scene  
Lo! Christmas children we:  
Drink-hael! behold we lean  
At a far Mother's knee;  
To dream that thus her bosom smiled,  
And learn the lip of Bethlehem's Child.  
ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

## WASSAIL SONG

Here we come a-wassailing  
Among the leaves so green,  
Here we come a-wandering,  
So fair to be seen:

*Love and joy come to you,  
And to your wassail too,  
And God bless you, and send you  
A happy new year.*

Our wassail cup is made  
Of the rosemary tree,  
And so is your beer  
Of the best barley:

We are not daily beggars  
That beg from door to door,  
But we are neighbours' children  
Whom you have seen before:

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Call up the butler of this house,  
Put on his golden ring;  
Let him bring us up a glass of beer,  
And better we shall sing:

We have got a little purse  
Of stretching leather skin;  
We want a little of your money  
To line it well within:

Bring us out a table,  
And spread it with a cloth;  
Bring us out a mouldy cheese,  
And some of your Christmas loaf:

God bless the master of this house,  
Likewise the mistress too;  
And all the little children  
That round the table go:

Good Master and good Mistress,  
While you're sitting by the fire,  
Pray think of us poor children  
Who are wandering in the mire:  
Yorkshire, 1850



so der ere godes ys dit bo  
ych genomē vllē mē boych  
dat men noemt Aurea legē

da. dat ys zo duytsch geschē dye gulde le  
gende off dat Passional. Dye seite ende  
werldicheyt der heylighe ys inghesatz vmb  
zo verhaelen dat men versueme hayt. wāt  
wyr hebben vyf heylighen ghelaessen dye wyrt nyet geert enba  
uen myt eynichen festen. want wyrt enmoeghen alre lyeuen hey  
lyghen dache nyet vyren ende eerwerdighen. vmb dat yre soe vyl  
ys en ock vmb onser krāctheyt wyllē. want wyrt syn frānce ende  
en moegē nyet doe vmb kōtheit der tyt. vmb dat os tyt gebreche  
solde. wāt sunte Jheronimus schryft in der epistole vor synē kalen  
dier dat gheyn dach bynnē dē iāer en is. besatuen den Jaers dach.  
daer synt vyff dusēt merckers in ghe doet off meer Jnd daer vmb  
is yt gheordeniert in der heyliger tyt. want wyrt alle heylighen  
besundlinge nyet eren moeghe dat wyrt sy doch alle samē eren moe  
ghē. Maer vmb dat gheordeniert ys dat wyrt dye heylighe vyere  
Daer seghe wyllselmus vā Antysidiorē. vi. reedē vā. Dye eerste  
reedē ys Dye ere die wyrt gode doe. wāt wyrt yn eren in synen heyl  
ghe Jnd wer dye heylighe cert. eren den ghenē der dyse heylighen  
mache. Dye ander reedē ys. vmb hulpe onser frāncheyt. want by  
ons selus enmoegē wyrt gheyn selcheit verkrighe. ende daer vmb  
ys ons noit dat dye heylighe vor ons byddē. Die derde reedē ys  
op dat onse selcheit vermeer werde. op der heylighe hoedheyt.  
dye men predyche op yre dach. wāt werde sterftlyche mynsche also  
verheue. so moeghe wyrt ouch verheue werde. Dye vierde reedē ys  
vmb yre epēel na zo volghē. wāt als men yre leuen leste. so wer  
de wyrt verwecket yn zo voldoe. Dye vyfte reedē ys om dye schult  
dye wyrt dye eyn dē anderē schuldych synt. wāt dye heylighen haer  
uen van ons fest in dem hemel. want se hauen troude op eynen  
suynder der penitēcie doet Dye sesste reedē ys vmb zo verkrighen  
onse ere Soe doen wyrt onse sache ende vorderē onse ere. want als  
wyrt onse broeder eren. soe eren wyrt ons selus. vmb dat gotliche dyn  
ge alle dynet ghemeyn mache. ertiche dynen ende hemeliche dyn  
gen ende ewyge dynen.

Van dem Aduent ons heren.:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

I was this Morning surprised with a great Knocking at the Door, when my Landlady's Daughter came up to me, and told me, that there was a Man below desired to speak with me. Upon my asking her who it was, she told me it was a very grave elderly Person, but that she did not know his Name. I immediately went down to him, and found him to be the Coachman of my worthy Friend *Sir Roger de Coverley*. He told me that his master came to Town last Night, and would be glad to take a Turn with me in Gray's-Inn Walks. As I was wondering in myself what had brought *Sir Roger* to Town, not having lately received any Letter from him, he told me that his Master was come up to get a Sight of Prince *Eugene*, and that he desired I would immediately meet him.

I was no sooner come into Gray's Inn Walks, but I heard my old Friend upon the Terrace hemming twice or thrice to himself with great Vigour, for he loves to clear his Pipes in good Air, to make use of his own Phrase, and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the Strength which he still exerts in his Morning Hems.

Our Salutations were very hearty on both Sides, consisting of many kind Shakes of the Hand, and several affectionate Looks which we cast upon one another. After which the Knight told me my good Friend his Chaplain was very well, and much at my Service, and that the Sunday before he had made a most incomparable Sermon out of Dr.



## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*Barrow.* I have left, says he, all my Affairs in his Hands, and being willing to lay an Obligation upon him, have deposited with him Thirty Marks, to be distributed among his poor Parishioners.

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the Welfare of Will *Wimble*. Upon which he put his Hand in his Fob, and presented me in his Name with a Tobacco-stopper, telling me that Will had been busy all the beginning of the Winter in turning great Quantities of them; and that he made a Present of one to every Gentleman in the Country who has good Principles, and smoaks. He added, that poor *Will* was at present under great Tribulation, for that Tom *Touchy* had taken the Law of him for cutting some Hazel-Sticks out of one of his Hedges.

Among other Pieces of News which the Knight brought from his Country-seat, he informed me that Moll *White* was dead; and that about a Month after her Death the Wind was so very high, that it blew down the End of one of his Barns. But for my own Part, says Sir *Roger*, I do not think that the old Woman had any Hand in it.

He afterwards fell into an Account of the Diversions which had passed in his House during the Holidays; for Sir *Roger*, after the laudable Custom of his Ancestors, always keeps open House at Christmas. I learned from him that he had killed eight Fat Hogs for this Season, that he had dealt about his Chines very liberally

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

amongst his Neighbours, and that in particular he had sent a String of Hogs'-puddings with a Pack of Cards to every poor Family in the Parish. I have often thought, says Sir *Roger*, it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the Middle of Winter. It is the most dead uncomfortable Time of the Year, when the poor People would suffer very much from their Poverty and Cold, if they had not good Chear, warm Fires, and Christmas Gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor Hearts at this Season, and to see the whole Village merry in my great Hall. I allow a double Quantity of Malt to my Small Beer, and set it a-running for twelve Days to every one that calls for it. I have always a Piece of Cold Beef and Mince-pye upon the Table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my Tenants pass away a whole Evening in playing their innocent Tricks, and smutting one another. Our Friend Will *Wimble* is as merry as any of them, and shews a thousand Roguish Tricks upon these Occasions.

I was very much delighted with the Reflexion of my old Friend, which carried so much Goodness with it. He then launched out into the Praise of the late Act of Parliament for securing the Church of *England*, and told me with great Satisfaction, that he believed it already began to take Effect, for that a rigid Dissenter who chanced to dine at his House on Christmas-day, had been observed to eat away very plentifully of his Plumb-porridge.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Having passed away the greatest Part of the Morning in hearing the Knight's Reflexions, which were partly private, and partly political, he asked me if I would smoke a Pipe with him over a Dish of Coffee at *Squire's*. As I love the old Man, I take Delight in complying with every Thing that is agreeable to him, and accordingly waited on him to the Coffee-house, where his venerable Figure drew upon us the Eyes of the whole Room. He had no sooner seated himself at the upper End of the high Table, but he called for a clean Pipe, a paper of Tobacco, a Dish of Coffee, a wax Candle, and the Supplement, with such an Air of Chearfulness and Good-humour, that all the Boys in the Coffee-room, who seemed to take Pleasure in serving him, were at once employed on his several Errands, insomuch that nobody else could come at a Dish of Tea, until the Knight had got all his Conveniences about him.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719)

London, *Dec.* 24, 1710. You will have a merryer Christmas-Eve than we here. I went up to Court before church, and in one of the rooms, there being but little company, a fellow in a red coat without a sword came up to me, and after words of course, askt me how the ladies did. I askt him what ladies? He said, Mrs. Dingley and Mrs. Johnson; Very well, said I, when I heard

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

from them last: and pray, when came you from thence, sir? Said he, I never was in Ireland; and just at that word lord Winchelsea comes up to me, and the man went off: as I went out I saw him again, and recollected him; it was Vedeau with a box. . . . When I came from church I went up to Court again, where Sir. Edm. Bacon told me the bad news from Spain, which you will hear before this reaches you; as we have it now, we are undone there, and it was odd to see the whole countenances of the Court changed so in two hours. Lady Mountjoy carried me home to dinner, where I staid not long after, and came home early, and now am got into bed, for you must always write to your MD's in bed, that's a maxim.

Mr. White and Mr. Red, write to MD when abed;  
Mr. Black and Mr. Brown, write to MD when  
you're down;

Mr. Oak and Mr. Willow, write to MD on your  
pillow.

What's this? faith I smell fire; what can it be? this house has a thousand stinks in it. I think to leave it on Thursday, and lodge over the way. Faith I must rise, and look at my chimney, for the smell grows stronger; stay—I have been up, and in my room, and found all safe, only a mouse within the fender to warm himself, which I could not catch. I smelt nothing more, but now in my bed-

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

chamber I smell it again; I believe I have singed the woolen curtain, and that's all, though I cannot smook it. Presto's plaguy silly tonight; an't he? Yes, and so he be. Ay, but if I should wake and see fire. Well; I'll venture; so good-night, &c.

25. Pray, young women, if I write so much as this every day, how will this paper hold a fortnight's work, and answer one of yours into the bargain? You never think of this, but let me go on like a simpleton. I wish you a merry Christmas, and many, many a one with poor Presto at some pretty place. . . .

26. By the lord Harry I shall be undone here with Christmas-boxes. The rogues at the coffee-house have raised their tax, every one giving a crown, and I gave mine for shame, besides a great many half-crowns, to great men's porters, &c.

30. Morning. The weather grows cold, you sauce-boxes. Sir Andrew Fountain, they bring me word, is better. I'll go rise, for my hands are starving while I write in bed.—Night. . . . Well, but when shall we answer this letter, No. 8, of MD's? Not till next year, faith—Pray, pray, Dingley, let me go to sleep; pray, pray, Stella, let me go slumber, and put out my wax-candle.

31. Morning. It is now seven, and I have got a fire, but am writing a-bed in my bed-chamber. 'Tis not shaving day, so I shall be ready to go before church to Mr. St. John, and to-morrow I will answer our MD's letter.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Would you answer MD's letter,  
On New Year's-day you'll do it better;  
For when the year with MD 'gins,  
It without MD never lins.

(These proverbs have always old words in them;  
*lins* is leaves off.)

But if on New-year you write nones,  
MD then will bang your bones.—

But Patrick says I must rise.—Night. I was early this morning with secretary St. John, and gave him a memorial to get the queen's letter for the First-Fruits, who has promised to do it in a very few days. He told me he had been with the Duke of Marlborough, who was lamenting his former wrong steps in joining with the Whigs, and said he was worn out with age, fatigues, and misfortunes. I swear it pityed me; and I really think they will not do well in too much mortifying that man, although indeed it is his own fault. He is covetous as hell, and ambitious as the Prince of it: he would fain have been general for life, and has broken all endeavours for Peace, to keep his greatness and get money. . . .

*January* 1, 1711. Morning. I wish my dearest pretty Dingley and Stella a happy new-year, and health, and mirth, and good stomachs, and Fr's company. Faith, I did not know how to write



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

pdf. Patrick wishes me a happy New-year, and desires I would rise, for it is a good fire, and faith 'tis cold. I was so politick last night with MD, never saw the like. Get the *Examiners*, and read them; the last nine or ten are full of the reasons for the late change, and of the abuses of the last ministry; and the great men assure me they are all true. I must rise and go see sir Andrew Fountain; but perhaps to-night I may answer MD's letter; so good-morrow, my mistresses all, good-morrow.

I wish you both a merry new year,  
Roast beef, minced pyes, and good strong beer,  
And me a share of your good cheer;  
That I was there, or you were here,  
And you are a little saucy dear.

Good-morrow again, dear sirrahs. . . .

DEAN SWIFT, *Journal to Stella*.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S



Dear old Friend and Absentee,—This is Christmas Day 1815 with us; what it may be with you I don't know, the 12th of June next year perhaps; and if it should be consecrated season with you, I don't see how you can keep it. You have no turkeys; you would not desecrate the festival by offering up a withered Chinese Bantam, instead of the savoury grand Norfolkian Holocaust, that smokes all around my nostrils at this moment from a thousand firesides. Then what Puddings have you? Where will you get holly to stick in your churches, or churches to stick your dried Tea-Leaves (that must be the substitute) in? What memorials you can have of the holy time, I see not. A chopped missionary or two may keep up the thin idea of Lent and the wilderness; but what standing evidence have you of the Nativity? 'Tis our rosy-cheeked, homestalled divines, whose faces shine to the tune of "Unto us a child is born," faces fragrant with the mince-pies of half a cen-

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

tury, that alone can authenticate the cheerful mystery. I feel my bowels refreshed with the holy tide; my zeal is great against the unedified heathen. Down with the Pagodas—down with the idols—Ching-chong-fo—and his foolish priesthood! Come out of Babylon, O my Friend! for her time is come; and the child that is native, and the Proselyte of her gates, shall kindle and smoke together! And in sober sense what makes you so long from among us, Manning? You must not expect to see the same England again which you have left.

Empires have been overturned, crowns trodden into dust, the face of the western World quite changed. Your friends have all got old—those you left blooming; myself (who am one of the few that remember you), those golden hairs which you recollect my taking a pride in, turned to silvery and grey. Mary has been dead and buried many years: she desired to be buried in the silk gown you sent her. Rickman, that you remember active and strong, now walks out supported by a servant maid and a stick. Martin Burney is a very old man. The other day an aged woman knocked at my door, and pretended to my acquaintance. It was long before I had the most distant cognition of her; but at last, together, we made her out to be Louisa, the daughter of Mrs. Topham, formerly Mrs. Kenney, whose first husband was Holcroft, the dramatic writer of the

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

last century. St. Paul's church is a heap of ruins; the Monument isn't half so high as you knew it, divers parts being taken down which the ravages of Time had rendered dangerous; the horse at Charing Cross is gone, no one knows whither; and all this has taken place while you have been settling whether Ho-hing-tong should be spelt with a — or a —. For aught I see you might almost as well remain where you are, and not come like a Struldbug into a world where few were born when you went away. Scarce here and there one will be able to make out your face. All your opinions will be out of date, your jokes obsolete, your puns rejected with fastidiousness as wit of the last Age. . . .

You see what mutations the busy hand of Time has produced while you have consumed in foolish voluntary Exile that time which might have gladdened your Friends—benefited your country; but reproaches are useless. Gather up the wretched reliques, my Friend, as fast as you can, and come to your old home. I will rub my eyes and try to recognize you. We will shake withered hands together, and talk of old things—of St. Mary's church and the barber's opposite, where the young students in Mathematics used to assemble. Poor Crips, that kept it afterwards, set up a fruiterer's shop in Trumpington Street, and for aught I know resides there still, for I saw the name up in the last journey I took there with my sister just before

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

she died. I suppose you heard that I had left the India House, and gone into the Fishmongers' Almshouses over the bridge. I have a little cabin there, small and homely, but you shall be welcome to it. You like Oysters, and to open them yourself; I'll get you some if you come in oyster time. Marshall, Godwin's old friend, is still alive, and talks of the faces you used to make.

Come as soon as you can.

CHARLES LAMB (to Thomas Manning)



*"THE MINSTRELS PLAYED THEIR  
CHRISTMAS TUNE"*

The minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check the music of the strings;  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listened?—till was paid  
Respect to every inmate's claim:  
The greeting given, the music played,  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "merry Christmas" wished to all.

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds;  
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,



## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Or they are offered at the door  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear—and sink again to sleep!

Or, at an earlier call, to mark,  
By blazing fire, the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence.

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;  
And some unbidden tears that rise  
For names once heard, and heard no more;  
Tears brightened by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

### *THE BELLS OF YULE*

The time draws near the birth of Christ:  
The moon is hid; the night is still;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound:

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate and now decrease,  
Peace and good-will, good-will and peace,  
Peace and good-will to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
And that my hold on life would break  
Before I heard those bells again:

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controll'd me when a boy;  
They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,  
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

With such compelling cause to grieve  
As daily vexes household peace,  
And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas eve;

Which brings no more a welcome guest  
To enrich the threshold of the night  
With shower'd largess of delight  
In dance and song and game and jest?

Yet go, while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cool baptismal font,  
Make one wreath more for Use and Womb,  
That guard the portals of the house;

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new;  
Why should they miss their yearly due  
Before their time? They, too, will die.

With trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
We gamboll'd, making vain pretence  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the beech:  
We heard them sweep the winter land;  
And in a circle hand in hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;  
We sang, though every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him  
Last year: impetuously we sang:

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us: surely rest is meet:  
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet,"  
And silence followed, and we wept.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Our voices took a higher range;  
Once more we sang: "They do not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, altho' they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gathered power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn; rise, holy morn;  
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:  
O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was born.

ALFRED TENNYSON

### *CHRISTMAS DAY—1868*

How will it dawn, the coming Christmas Day?  
A northern Christmas, such as painters love,  
And kinsfolk, shaking hands but once a year,  
And dames who tell old legends by the fire?  
Red sun, blue sky, white snow, and pearléd ice,  
Keen, ringing air, which sets the blood on fire,  
And makes the old man merry with the young,  
Through the short sunshine, through the longer  
night?

Or southern Christmas, dark and dank with  
mist,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And heavy with the scent of steaming leaves,  
And rosebuds mouldering on the dripping porch;  
One twilight, without rise or set of sun,  
Till beetles drone along the hollow lane,  
And round the leafless hawthorns, flitting bats  
Hawk the pale moths of winter? Welcome, then,  
At best, the flying gleam, the flying shower,  
The rain-pools glittering on the long white roads,  
And shadows sweeping on from down to down  
Before the salt Atlantic gale: yet come  
In whatsoever garb, or gay or sad,  
Come fair, come foul, 't will still be Christmas  
Day.

How will it dawn, the coming Christmas Day?  
To sailors lounging on the lonely deck  
Beneath the rushing trade-wind? Or to him  
Who, by some noisome harbor of the East,  
Watches swart arms roll down the precious bales,  
Spoils of the tropic forests; year by year  
Amid the din of heathen voices groaning,  
Himself half heathen? How to those—brave  
hearts!—

Who toil with laden loins and sinking stride,  
Beside the bitter wells of treeless sands  
Toward the peaks which flood the ancient Nile,  
To free a tyrant's captives? How to those—  
New patriarchs of the new-found underworld—  
Who stand, like Jacob, on the virgin lawns,  
And count their flocks' increase? To them that  
day

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Shall dawn in glory and solstitial blaze  
Of full midsummer sun; to them that mourn,  
Gay flowers beneath their feet, gay bird aloft,  
Shall tell of naught but summer: but to them,  
Ere yet, unwarned by carol or by chime,  
They spring into the saddle, thrills may come  
From that great heart of Christendom which beats  
Round all the worlds; and gracious thoughts of  
youth;

Of steadfast folk, who worship God at home;  
Of wise words, learnt beside their mothers' knee;  
Of innocent faces upturned once again,  
In awe and joy to listen to the tale  
Of God made man, and in a manger laid:  
May soften, purify, and raise the soul  
From selfish cares, and growing lust of gain,  
And phantoms of this dream which some call life,  
Toward the eternal facts; for here or there,  
Summer or winter, 't will be Christmas Day.

Blest day, which aye reminds us, year by year,  
What 't is to be a man; to curb and spurn  
The tyrant in us: that ignobler self  
Which boasts, not loathes, its likeness to the brute,  
And owns no good save ease, no ill save pain,  
No purpose, save its share in that wild war  
In which, through countless ages, living things  
Compete in internecine greed. Ah, God!  
Are we as creeping things, which have no Lord?  
That we are brutes, great God, we know too well:



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Apes, daintier-featured; silly birds who flaunt  
Their plumes unheeding of the fowler's step;  
Spiders, who catch with paper, not with webs;  
Tigers, who slay with cannon and sharp steel,  
Instead of teeth and claws—all these we are.  
Are we no more than these, and born but to com-  
pete—

To envy and devour, like beast or herb;  
Mere fools of nature; puppets of strong lusts,  
Taking the sword, to perish with the sword  
Upon the universal battlefield,  
Even as the things upon the moor outside?

The heath eats up green grass and delicate  
flowers,  
The pine eats up the heath, the grub the pine,  
The finch the grub, the hawk the silly finch;  
And man, the mightiest of all beasts of prey,  
Eats what he lists: the strong eat up the weak,  
The many eat the few; great nations, small;  
And he who cometh in the name of all—  
He, greediest, triumphs by the greed of all;  
And, armed by his own victims, eats up all:  
While ever out of the eternal heavens  
Looks patient down the great, magnanimous God,  
Who, Maker of all worlds, did sacrifice  
All to Himself! Nay, but Himself to one:  
Who taught mankind on that first Christmas Day  
What 't was to be a man; to give, not take;

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

To serve, not rule; to nourish, not devour;  
To help, not crush; if need, to die, not live.

Oh, blessed day, which giv'st the eternal lie  
To self, and sense, and all the brute within;  
Oh, come to us, amid this war of life;  
To hall and hovel, come; to all who toil,  
In senate, shop, or study; and to those  
Who, sundered by the wastes of half a world,  
Ill-warned, and sorely tempted, ever face  
Nature's brute powers, and men unmanned to  
brutes.

Come to them, blest and blessing, Christmas Day.  
Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem;  
The kneeling shepherds, and the Babe Divine:  
And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas Day.

CHARLES KINGSLEY



# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

## *A BALLAD OF CHRISTMAS*

It was the deep of night,  
And still was earth and sky,  
When neath the moonlight dazzling bright,  
Three ghosts came riding by.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,  
Lie kingdoms for them all:  
I wot their steeds trod wearily—  
The journey was not small.

By rock and desert, sand and stream,  
They footsore late did go:  
Now like a sweet and blessed dream  
Their path was deep with snow.

Shining like hoar-frost, rode they on,  
Three ghosts in earth's array:  
It was about the hour when wan  
Night turns at hint of day.

Oh, but their hearts with woe distraught  
Hailed not the wane of night,  
Only for Jesu still they sought  
To wash them clean and white.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

For bloody was each hand, and dark  
With death each orbless eye:—  
It was three traitors mute and stark  
Came riding silent by.

Silver their raiment and their spurs,  
And silver-shod their feet,  
And silver-pale each face that stare  
Into the moonlight sweet.

And he upon the left that rose  
Was Pilate, Prince of Rome,  
Whose journey once lay far abroad  
And now was nearing home.

And he upon the right that rode  
Herod of Salem sate,  
Whose mantle dipped in children's blood  
Shone clear as Heaven's gate.

And he these twain betwixt that rode  
Was clad as white as wool,  
Dyed in the Mercy of his God  
White was he crown to sole.

Throned mid a myriad saints in bliss  
Rise shall the Babe of Heaven  
To shine on these three ghosts, I wis,  
Smit through with sorrows seven.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Babe of the Blessed Trinity  
Shall smile their steeds to see:  
Herod and Pilate riding by,  
And Judas one of three.

WALTER DE LA MARE

## *A CHRISTMAS SERMON*

Take all in a word: the truth in God's breast  
Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed;  
Though he is so bright and we so dim,  
We are made in his image to witness him:  
And were no eye in us to tell,  
Instructed by no inner sense,  
The light of heaven from the dark of hell,  
That light would want its evidence,—  
Though justice, good and truth were still  
Divine, if, by some demon's will,  
Hatred and wrong had been proclaimed  
Law through the worlds, and right misnamed.  
No mere exposition of morality  
Made or in part or in totality,  
Should win you to give it worship, therefore:  
And, if no better proof you will care for,  
Whom do you count the worst man upon earth?  
Be sure, he knows, in his conscience, more  
Of right what is, than arrives at birth  
In the best man's acts that we bow before:  
This last knows better—true, but my fact is,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

'Tis one thing to know, and another to practise.  
 And thence I conclude that the real God-function  
 Is to furnish a motive and injunction  
 For practising what we know already.  
 And such an injunction and such a motive  
 As the God in Christ, do you waive, and "heady,  
 High-minded," hang your tablet-votive  
 Outside the fane on a finger-post?  
 Morality to the uttermost,  
 Supreme in Christ as we all confess,  
 Why need we prove would avail no jot  
 To make him God, if God he were not?  
 What is the point where himself lays stress?  
 Does the precept run "Believe in good,  
 "In justice, truth now understood  
 "For the first time?"—or, "Believe in me,  
 "Who lived and died, yet essentially,  
 Am "Lord of Life?" Whoever can take  
 The same to his heart and for mere love's sake  
 Conceive of the love,—that man obtains  
 A new truth; no conviction gains  
 Of an old one only, made intense  
 By a fresh appeal to his faded sense.

ROBERT BROWNING, *Christmas Eve*



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *SAINT BRANDAN*

Saint Brandan sails the northern main;  
The brotherhood of saints are glad.  
He greets them once, he sails again;  
So late! such storms! The saint is mad!  
He heard, across the howling seas,  
Chime convent-bells on wintry nights;  
He saw, on spray-swept Hebrides,  
Twinkle the monastery-lights;

But north, still north, Saint Brandan steered;  
And now no bells, no convents more!  
The hurtling Polar Lights are neared,  
The sea without a human shore.  
At last (it was the Christmas-night;  
Stars shone after a day of storm)  
He sees float past an iceberg white,  
And on it—Christ!—a living form.  
That furtive mien, that scowling eye,  
Of hair that red and tufted fell,  
It is of—where shall Brandan fly?—  
The traitor, Judas, out of hell.

Palsied with terror, Brandan sate;  
The moon was bright, the iceberg near.  
He hears a voice sigh humbly, "Wait!  
By high permission I am here.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“One moment wait, thou holy man!  
On earth my crime, my death, they knew;  
My name is under all men’s ban:  
Ah! tell them of my respite too.

“Tell them, one blessed Christmas-night  
(It was the first after I came,  
Breathing self-murder, frenzy, spite,  
To rue my guilt in endless flame),—

“I felt, as I in torment lay  
’Mid the souls plagued by heavenly power,  
An angel touch mine arm, and say,—  
‘Go hence, and cool thyself an hour!’

“‘Ah! whence this mercy, Lord?’ I said.  
‘The leper recollect,’ said he,  
‘Who asked the passers-by for aid,  
In Joppa, and thy charity.’

“Then I remembered how I went,  
In Joppa, through the public street,  
One morn when the sirocco spent  
Its storms of dust with burning heat:

“And in the street a leper sate,  
Shivering with fever, naked, old;  
Sand raked his sores from heel to pate,  
The hot wind fevered him fivefold.

“He gazed upon me as I passed,  
And murmured, ‘Help me, or I die!’

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

To the poor wretch my cloak I cast  
Saw him look eased, and hurried by.

. . . . .  
“Once every year, when carols wake,  
On earth, the Christmas-night’s repose,  
Arising from the sinner’s lake,  
I journey to these healing snows.

“I stanch with ice my burning breast,  
With silence balm my whirling brain.  
O Brandan! to this hour of rest,  
That Joppa leper’s ease was pain.”

Tears started to Saint Brandan’s eyes;  
He bowed his head, he breathed a prayer,  
Then looked—and lo, the frosty skies!  
The iceberg, and no Judas there!

MATTHEW ARNOLD

### *BABUSHKA*

(A Russian Legend)

Babushka sits before the fire  
Upon a winter’s night;  
The driving winds heap up the snow,  
Her hut is snug and tight;  
The howling winds,—they only make  
Babushka’s fire more bright!

C O M E . C H R I S T M A S

She hears a knocking at the door:

So late—who can it be?

She hastes to lift the wooden latch,

No thought of fear has she;

The wind-blown candle in her hand

Shines out on strangers three.

Their beards are white with age, and snow

That in the darkness flies;

Their floating locks are long and white,

But kindly are their eyes

That sparkle underneath their brows,

Like stars in frosty skies.

“Babushka, we have come from far,

We tarry but to say,

A little Prince is born this night,

Who all the world shall sway.

Come join the search; come, go with us,

Who go our gifts to pay.”

Babushka shivers at the door;

“I would I might behold

The little Prince who shall be King

But ah! the night is cold,

The wind so fierce, the snow so deep,

And I, good sirs, am old.”

The strangers three, no word they speak,

But fade in snowy space!

Babushka sits before her fire,

And dreams, with wistful face:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

"I would that I had questioned them,  
So I the way might trace!

"When morning comes with blessed light,  
I'll early be awake;  
My staff in hand I'll go,—perchance,  
Those strangers I'll o'ertake;  
And, for the Child some little toys  
I'll carry, for His sake."

The morning came, and, staff in hand,  
She wandered in the snow,  
She asked the way of all she met,  
But none the way could show.  
"It must be farther yet," she sighed;  
"Then farther will I go."

And still, 'tis said, on Christmas Eve,  
When high the drifts are piled,  
With staff, with basket on her arm,  
Babushka seeks the Child:  
At every door her face is seen,—  
Her wistful face and mild!

Her gifts at every door she leaves;  
She bends, and murmurs low,  
Above each little face half-hid  
By pillows white as snow:  
"And is He here?" Then, softly sighs,  
"Nay, farther must I go!"

EDITH M. THOMAS

## SALVETTE ET BERNADOU

## I

C'est la veille de Noël, dans une grosse ville de Bavière. Par les rues blanches de neige, dans la confusion du brouillard, les bruits des voitures et des cloches, la foule se presse joyeuse aux rôtisseries en plein vent, aux baraques, aux étalages. Frôlant avec un bruissement léger les boutiques enrubannées et fleuries, des branches de houx vert, des sapins entiers chargés de pendeloques passent portés à bras, dominant toutes les têtes, comme une ombre des forêts de Thuringe, un souvenir de nature dans la vie factice de l'hiver. Le jour tombe. Là-bas, derrière les jardins de la Résidence, on voit encore une lueur de soleil couchant, toute rouge à travers la brume, et il y a par la ville une telle gaieté, tant de préparatifs de fête que chaque lumière qui s'allume aux vitres semble pendre à un arbre de Noël. C'est qu'aujourd'hui n'est pas un Noël ordinaire! Nous sommes en l'an de grâce mil huit cent soixante-dix, et la naissance du Christ n'est qu'un prétexte pour boire à l'illustre von der Than et célébrer le triomphe des guerriers bavarois. Noël! Noël! Les juifs de la ville basse eux-mêmes sont en liesse. Voilà le vieil Augustus Cahn qui tourne en courant le coin de la *Grappe bleue*. Jamais ses yeux de furet n'ont relui comme



ce soir. Jamais sa petite quouette en broussaille n'a frétille si allègrement. Dans sa manche usée aux cordes des besaces est passé un honnête petit panier, plein jusqu'aux bords, couvert d'une serviette bise, avec le goulot d'une bouteille et une branche de houx qui dépassent.

Que diable le vieil usurier compte-t-il faire de tout cela? Est-ce qu'il fêterait Noël, lui aussi? Aurait-il réuni ses amis, sa famille, pour boire à la patrie allemande? Mais non! Tout le monde sait bien que le vieux Cahn n'a pas de patrie. Son *Vaterland*, à lui, c'est son coffre-fort. Il n'a pas de famille non plus, pas d'amis; rien que des créanciers. Ses fils, ses associés plutôt, sont partis depuis trois mois avec l'armée. Ils trafiquent là-bas derrière les fourgons de la landwehr, vendant de l'eau-de-vie, achetant des pendules, et, les soirs de bataille, s'en allant retourner les poches des morts, éventrer les sacs tombés aux fossés des routes. Trop vieux pour suivre ses enfants, le père Cahn est resté en Bavière, et il y fait des affaires magnifiques avec les prisonniers français. Toujours à rôder autour des baraquements, c'est lui qui rachète les montres, les aiguillettes, les médailles, les bons sur la poste. On le voit se glisser dans les hôpitaux, dans les ambulances. Il s'approche du lit des blessés, et leur demande tout bas en son hideux baragouin:

— *A fez-fus guelgue jôsse à fentre?*

Et tenez! en ce moment même, si vous le voyez

trotter si vite avec son panier sous le bras, c'est que l'hôpital militaire ferme à cinq heures, et qu'il y a deux Français qui l'attendent là-haut dans cette grande maison noire aux fenêtres grillées et étroites, où Noël n'a, pour éclairer sa veillée, que les pâles lumières qui gardent le chevet des mourants. . .

## II

Ces deux Français s'appellent Salvette et Bernadou. Ce sont deux chasseurs à pied, deux Provençaux du même village, enrôlés au même bataillon et blessés par le même obus. Seulement Salvette avait la vie plus dure, et déjà il commence à se lever, à faire quelques pas de son lit à la fenêtre. Bernadou, lui, ne veut pas guérir. Dans les rideaux blafards de son lit d'hospice, sa figure paraît plus maigre, plus languissante de jour en jour; et quand il parle du pays, du retour, c'est avec ce sourire triste des malades, où il y a bien plus de résignation que d'espérance. Aujourd'hui, cependant, il s'est animé un peu en pensant à cette belle fête de Noël qui, dans nos campagnes de Provence, ressemble à un grand feu de joie allumé au milieu de l'hiver, en se rappelant les sorties des messes de minuit, l'église parée et lumineuse, les rues du village toutes noires, pleines de monde, puis la longue veillée autour de la table, les trois flambeaux traditionnels, l'aïoli, les escargots et la jolie cérémonie du *cacho fio* (bûche

de Noël) que le grand-père promène autour de la maison et arrose avec du vin cuit.

—Ah! mon pauvre Salvette, quel triste Noël nous allons faire cette année! . . . Si seulement on avait eu de quoi se payer un petit pain blanc et une fiole de vin clairret! . . . Ca m'aurait fait plaisir, avant de passer l'arme à gauche, d'arroser encore une fois le *cacho fio* avec toi. . .

Et en parlant de pain blanc et de vin clairret, le malade a ses yeux qui brillent. Mais comment faire? Ils n'ont plus rien, les malheureux, ni argent, ni montre. Salvette garde bien encore dans sa doublure un bon de poste de quarante francs. Seulement, c'est pour le jour où ils seront libres, et la première halte qu'on fera dans une auberge de France. Cet argent-là est sacré. Pas moyen d'y toucher. . . Pourtant, ce pauvre Bernadou est si malade! Qui sait s'il pourra jamais se remettre en route pour retourner là-bas! Et puisque voilà un beau Noël qu'on peut encore fêter ensemble, est-ce qu'il ne vaudrait pas mieux en profiter? . . .

Alors, sans rien dire à son *pays*, Salvette a décousu sa tunique pour prendre le bon de poste, et quand le vieux Cahn est venu, comme tous les matins, faire sa tournée dans les salles, après de longs débats, des discussions à voix basse, il lui a glissé dans la main ce carré de papier, raide et jauni, sentant la poudre et taché de sang. Depuis ce moment, Salvette a pris un air de mystère. Il se frotte les mains et rit tout seul en regardant

Bernadou. Et maintenant que le jour tombe, il est là à guetter, le front collé aux vitres, jusqu'à ce qu'il ait vu dans le brouillard de la place déserte le vieil Augustus Cahn tout essoufflé, qui arrive, un petit panier au bras.

## III

Ce minuit solennel, qui sonne à tous les clochers de la ville, tombe lugubrement dans la nuit blanche des malades. La salle d'hospice est silencieuse, éclairée seulement par les veilleuses suspendues au plafond. De grandes ombres errantes flottent sur les lits, les murs nus, avec un balancement perpétuel qui semble la respiration oppressée de tous les gens étendus là. Par moment, il y a des rêves qui parlent haut, des cauchemars qui gémissent, pendant que de la rue montent un murmure vague, des pas, des voix, confondus dans la nuit sonore et froide comme un porche de cathédrale. On sent la hâte recueillie, le mystère d'une fête religieuse traversant l'heure du sommeil et mettant dans la ville éteinte la lueur sourde des lanternes et l'embrasement des vitraux déglise.

—Est-ce que tu dors, Bernadou? . . .

Tout doucement, sur la petite table, près du lit de son ami, Salvette a posé une bouteille de vin de Lunel, un pain rond, un joli pain de Noël où la branche de houx est plantée toute droite. Le blessé ouvre ses yeux cernés de fièvre. A la lumière indécise des veilleuses et sous le reflet blanc des grands

toits où la lune s'éblouit dans la neige, ce Noël improvisé lui semble fantastique.—“Allons, réveille-toi, pays. . . Il ne sera pas dit que deux Provençaux auront laissé passer le réveillon, sans l'arroser d'un coup de clairette. . .” Et Salvette le redresse avec des soins de mère. Il emplit les gobelets, coupe le pain; l'on trinque et l'on parle de la Provence. Peu à peu Bernadou s'anime, s'attendrit. Le vin blanc, les souvenirs. . . Avec cette enfance que les malades retrouvent au fond de leur faiblesse, il demande à Salvette de lui chanter un Noël provençal. Le camarade ne demande pas mieux: “Voyons, lequel veux-tu? Celui de *l'Hôte?* ou les *Trois Rois?* ou *Saint Joseph m'a dit?*”

—Non! j'aime mieux les *Bergers*. C'est celui que nous chantions toujours à la maison. . .

Va pour les *Bergers!* A demi voix, la tête dans les rideaux, Salvette commence à fredonner. Tout à coup, au dernier couplet, quand les pâtres ont déposé sur le crèche leur offrande d'œufs frais et de fromageons et que, les congédiant d'un air affable,

*Joseph leur dit: Allons! soyez bien sages,  
Tournez-vous-en et faites bon voyage.*

*Bergers,  
Prenez votre congé. . .*

voilà le pauvre Bernadou qui glisse et retombe lourdement sur l'oreiller. Son camarade pensant qu'il s'endort, l'appelle, le secoue. Mais le blessé reste immobile, et la petite branche de houx en

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

travers sur le drap rigide semble déjà la palme verte que l'on met au chevet des morts.

Salvette a compris. Alors tout pleurant, un peu ivre de la fête et d'une si grande douleur, il reprend à pleine voix dans le silence du dortoir le joyeux refrain de Provence:

*Bergers,  
Prenez votre congé.*

ALPHONSE DAUDET

### CHRISTMAS TREES

(A Christmas Circular Letter)

The city had withdrawn into itself  
And left at last the country to the country;  
When between whirls of snow not come to lie  
And whirls of foliage not yet laid, there drove  
A stranger to our yard, who looked the city,  
Yet did in country fashion in that there  
He sat and waited till he drew us out  
A-buttoning coats to ask him who he was.  
He proved to be the city come again  
To look for something it had left behind  
And could not do without and keep its Christmas.  
He asked if I would sell my Christmas trees;  
My woods—the young fir balsams like a place  
Where houses all are churches and have spires.  
I hadn't thought of them as Christmas Trees.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

I doubt if I was tempted for a moment  
To sell them off their feet to go in cars  
And leave the slope behind the house all bare,  
Where the sun shines now no warmer than the  
moon.

I'd hate to have them know it if I was.  
Yet more I'd hate to hold my trees except  
As others hold theirs or refuse for them,  
Beyond the time of profitable growth,  
The trial by market everything must come to.  
I dallied so much with the thought of selling.  
Then whether from mistaken courtesy  
And fear of seeming short of speech, or whether  
From hope of hearing good of what was mine,  
I said, "There aren't enough to be worth while."  
"I could soon tell how many they would cut,  
You let me look them over."

"You could look.

But don't expect I'm going to let you have them."  
Pasture they spring in, some in clumps too close  
That lop each other of boughs, but not a few  
Quite solitary and having equal boughs  
All round and round. The latter he nodded  
"Yes" to,

Or paused to say beneath some lovelier one,  
With a buyer's moderation, "That would do."  
I thought so too, but wasn't there to say so.  
We climbed the pasture on the south, crossed over,  
And came down on the north.



## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

He said, "A thousand."

"A thousand Christmas trees! at what apiece?"

He felt some need of softening that to me:

"A thousand trees would come to thirty dollars."

Then I was certain I had never meant

To let him have them. Never show surprise!

But thirty dollars seemed so small beside

The extent of pasture I should strip, three cents  
(For that was all they figured out apiece)

Three cents so small beside the dollar friends

I should be writing to within the hour

Would pay in cities for good trees like those,

Regular vestry-trees whole Sunday Schools

Could hang enough on to pick off enough.

A thousand Christmas trees I didn't know I had!

Worth three cents more to give away than sell,

As may be shown by a simple calculation.

Too bad I couldn't lay one in a letter.

I can't help wishing I could send you one,

In wishing you herewith a Merry Christmas.

ROBERT FROST

## *ON CHRISTMAS CARDS*

I do not receive many Christmas cards. This is not surprising, as I never remember to send any out. The most I have ever done, when feeling most strenuous, was to scramble out a few New

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Year's cards to people who had sent me Christmas cards, and whose remembrance of me stirred my gratitude. But I do always get some, and I got a few this year.

I have just been looking at them all before cremating them. Those which come from the more intellectual of my friends have no longer anything peculiarly Christmas-cardy about them. They are in good taste, designed by or for the senders, admirably printed, and in point of language ready for the scrutiny of the most fastidious critic of style. Nothing could be more refined. There are no sprigs of holly on these, no claspings of amputated hands, no squat village towers amid snowy landscapes. They have brown collotype pictures of the owners' houses, choice etchings after Rembrandt, or exquisite coloured reproductions of St. Vincent and a Donor by Melozzo da Forli in the Palazzo Doria Pamphili at Rome. Each card of them is a silent protest against the old kind of card. As I look at them I hear them saying, "What an improvement we are! How clearly we demonstrate that Christmas greetings can be conveyed without vulgarity! What careful consideration we betray! The men and women who chose *us* really wished to send their friends something worth having." There is a beautiful woodcut on yellowish hand-made paper, with "A Happy Christmas" as the only inscription. There is a page from an illuminated manuscript. There is

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a card specially written out by an expert calligrapher. There is another displaying specimens of seventeenth-century typographical ornament. All very chaste, and not one of them (I need scarcely say) bearing a line of verse, even of good verse.

Yet from the more old-fashioned and less aspiring remnant of my acquaintance there still come a few tokens of the old Victorian sorts, freely powdered with Robin Redbreasts and mistletoe, and carrying quatrains to a card. It was one of these quatrains that checked me in the middle of my campaign of destruction and made me begin these reflections. It runs as follows:

Glad Christmas to you on this day,  
Good Fortune ever find you,  
Life's Sunlight be before you aye,  
Its shadows all behind you.

Well, you will say, there is nothing very odd about that; it is precisely like thousands of others. Wait a moment. The odd thing is that under those verses is printed the name "Browning."

I stand open to correction. I have, I admit, not searched Robert Browning's works for this sequence of elegant sentiments. But I really cannot suppose that he wrote it. Nor can I believe that his wife wrote it. Nor can I even believe that Mr. Oscar Browning wrote it, and with him is exhausted the catalogue of Brownings known

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to Fame or me. There have been, no doubt, other Brownings. John Browning or Nicodemus Browning may have been the author of this composition; or George Bernard Browning, or J. Pierpont Browning, or some inglorious but not altogether mute Ella Wheeler Browning. But if Robert Browning was really the author he must certainly have had a bad off-day, on which his style was indistinguishable from that of any other Christmas card poet. And the common style of Christmas card poets reaches the lowest known or conceivable level of banality in conception and tameness in execution.

I look through some of the other missives which have been sent to me in the hope (I must presume) of cheering me up, of inducing merriment and an optimistic outlook. Here are some of the verses on them—if I am committing breaches of copyright I must apologise:

### (1)

To you and those within your home  
This Christmas Day may blessings come,  
And may good luck, good health, good cheer  
Be guests of yours for all the year.

### (2)

As on Life's tide the seasons come and go  
May sorrow ebb and gladness ever flow.

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

(3)

Milestones of olden memories  
Along sweet friendship's way;  
Oh; how they brighten up the past,  
And cheer the coming day.

(4)

Greeting just to say we all unite,  
In wishing you and yours a Christmas bright.

(5)

Deck out the walls with garlands gay,  
And let the kindly laughter play.  
List! the chimes are sweetly sounding,  
Xmas happiness abounding;  
All that's good and true be thine  
At this merry festive time.

(6)

This is the time for sweet remembrance,  
For thoughts of friends both old and new;  
The words will not express the wishes  
Sent within this card for you.

If Browning wrote one of them why not the lot? There is, I admit, a touch of *Mrs.* Browning about the rhyme of "time" and "thine" in Number Five, and the elaborate maritime image in Number Two has perhaps a touch of Swinburne.

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But except for these very slight local differences the whole of these, not to mention thousands of others, all that you have ever seen and all that your Aunt Maria has ever seen, might have come from one pen. It is amazing that every publisher of Christmas cards should have "on tap" a bard so skilful that he can turn out hundreds of these poems without ever introducing a touch of individuality or novelty. For somebody must write them, even if it be only the chairman of the manufacturing company or the compositor who does the type-setting. Who are these mysterious people? Are they scattered amateurs everywhere? Or is it here that we find the explanation of how our professional and justly celebrated poets earn their living? Or is this one of those industries which are the hereditary monopoly of a few families, like flint-knapping, violin-making, and gold-beating? Does Mr. Jones of Putney, whose neighbours know him for one who "goes up to the City" every morning on some vague but presumably respectable business, really immure himself for eight hours per diem in an office in Chancery Lane and compose those verses which he never mentions at home, his father having left him a very valuable connection with the makers? Or—this is another solution—is it really that nobody has written any new one for years?

J. C. SQUIRE

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *CHRISTMAS IN INDIA*

Dim dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky is saffron-yellow—

As the women in the village grind the corn,  
And the parrots seek the river-side, each calling to  
his fellow

That the Day, the staring Eastern Day is born.  
Oh the white dust on the highway! Oh the  
stenches in the byway!

Oh the clammy fog that hovers over earth!  
And at Home they're making merry 'neath the  
white and scarlet berry—

What part have India's exiles in their mirth?

Full day behind the tamarisks—the sky is blue and  
staring—

As the cattle crawl afield beneath the yoke,  
And they bear One o'er the field-path, who is past  
all hope or caring

To the ghat below the curling wreaths of smoke.  
Call on Rama, going slowly, as ye bear a brother  
lowly—

Call on Rama—he may hear, perhaps, your  
voice!

With our hymn-books and our Psalters we appeal  
to other altars

And to-day we bid “good Christian men  
rejoice!”



## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is hot  
above us—

As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking wan.  
They will drink our healths at dinner—those who  
tell us how they love us,

And forget us till another year begone!  
Oh the toil that needs no breaking! Oh the  
Heimweh, ceaseless, aching!

Oh the black dividing Sea and alien Plain!  
Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it. Gold  
was good—we hoped to hold it,

And to-day we know the fulness of our gain.  
Gray dusk behind the tamarisks—the parrots fly  
together—

As the sun is sinking slowly over Home;  
And his last ray seems to mock us shackled in a  
lifelong tether

That drags us back howe'er so far we roam.  
Hard her service, poor her payment—she in an-  
cient, tattered raiment—

India, she the grim Stepmother of our kind.  
If the year of life be lent her, if her temple's  
shrine we enter,

The door is shut—we may not look behind.

Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls begin  
their chorus—

As the conches from the temples scream and  
bray.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

With the fruitless years behind us, and the hopeless years before us,

Let us honor, O my brothers, Christmas Day!

Call a truce, then, to our labors—let us feast with friends and neighbors,

And be merry as the custom of our caste;

For if “faint and forced the laughter,” and if sadness follow after,

We are richer by one mocking Christmas past.

RUDYARD KIPLING

Just before the clock struck twelve, they lighted the lanterns and started. The moon, in her third quarter, had risen since the snowstorm; but the dense accumulation of snow-cloud weakened her power to a faint twilight, which was rather pervasive of the landscape than traceable to the sky. The breeze had gone down, and the rustle of their feet, and tones of their speech, echoed with an alert rebound from every post, boundary-stone, and ancient wall they passed, even where the distance of the echo's origin was less than a few yards. Beyond their own slight noises nothing was to be heard, save the occasional howl of foxes in the direction of Yalbury Wood, or the brush of a rabbit among the grass now and then, as it scampered out of their way.

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Most of the outlying homesteads and hamlets had been visited by about two o'clock; they then passed across the Home Plantation towards the main village. Pursuing no recognised track, great care was necessary in walking lest their faces should come in contact with the low-hanging boughs of the old trees, which in many spots formed dense overgrowths of interlaced branches.

"Times have changed from the times they used to be," said Mail, regarding nobody can tell what interesting old panoramas with an inward eye, and letting his outward glance rest on the ground, because it was as convenient a position as any. "People don't care much about us now! I've been thinking, we must be almost the last left in the county of the old string-players. Barrel-organs, and they next door to 'em that you blow wi' your foot, have come in terribly of late years."

"Ah!" said Bowman, shaking his head; and old Williams, on seeing him, did the same thing.

"More's the pity," replied another. "Time was—long and merry ago now!—when not one of the varmits was to be heard of; but it served some of the choirs right. They should have stuck to strings as we did, and keep out clar'nets, and done away with serpents. If you'd thrive in musical religion, stick to strings, says I."

"Strings are well enough, as far as that goes," said Mr. Spinks.

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"There's worse things than serpents," said Mr. Penny. "Old things pass away, 'tis true; but a serpent was a good old note: a deep rich tone was the serpent."

"Clar'nets, however, be bad at all times," said Michael Mail. "One Christmas—years ago now, years—I went the rounds wi' the Dibbeach choir. 'Twas a hard frosty night, and the keys of all the clar'nets froze—ah, they did freeze!—so that 'twas like drawing a cork every time a key was opened; the players o' 'em had to go into a hedger and ditcher's chimley-corner, and thaw their clar'nets every now and then. An icicle o' spet hung down from the end of every man's clar'net a span long; and as to fingers—well, there, if ye'll believe me, we had no fingers at all, to our knowledge."

"I can well bring back to my mind," said Mr. Penny, "what I said to poor Joseph Ryme (who took the tribble part in High-Story Church for two-and-forty year) when they thought of having clar'nets there. 'Joseph,' I said, says I, 'depend upon 't, if so be you have them tooting clar'nets you'll spoil the whole set-out. Clar'nets were not made for the service of Providence; you can see it by looking at 'em,' I said. And what cam o't? Why, my dear souls, the parson set up a barrel-organ on his own account within two years o' the time I spoke, and the old choir went to nothing."

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"As far as look is concerned," said the tranter, "I don't for my part see that a fiddle is much nearer heaven than a clar'net. 'Tis farther off. There's always a rakish, scampish countenance about a fiddle that seems to say the Wicked One had a hand in making o'en; while angels be supposed to play clar'nets in heaven, or som'at like 'em, if ye may believe picters."

"Robert Penny, you were in the right," broke in the eldest Dewy. "They should ha' stuck to strings. Your brass-man, is brass—well and good; your reed-man, is reed—well and good; your percussion-man, is percussion—good again. But I don't care who hears me say it, nothing will speak to your heart wi' the sweetness of the man of strings!"

"Strings for ever!" said little Jimmy.

"Strings alone would have held their ground against all the newcomers i' creation." ("True, true!" said Bowman.) "But clar'nets was death." ("Death they was!" said Mr. Penny.) "And harmoniums," William continued, in a louder voice, and getting excited by these signs of approval, "harmoniums and barrel-organs" ("Ah!" and groans from Spinks) "be miserable—what shall I call 'em—miserable—"

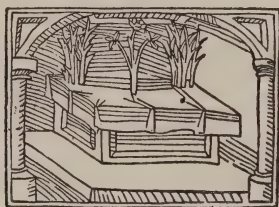
"Sinners," suggested Jimmy, who made large strides like the men, and did not lag behind like the other little boys.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“Miserable machines for such a divine thing as music.”

“Right, William, and so they be!” said the choir with earnest unanimity.

THOMAS HARDY, “The Return of the Native”



. . . De son côté le voyageur avait déposé dans un coin son bâton et son paquet. L'hôte parti, il s'assit sur un fauteuil et resta quelque temps pensif. Puis il ôta ses souliers, prit une des deux bougies, souffla l'autre, poussa la porte et sortit de la chambre, regardant autour de lui comme quelqu'un qui cherche. Il traversa un corridor et parvint à l'escalier. Là il entendit un petit bruit très doux qui ressemblait à une respiration d'enfant. Il se laissa conduire par ce bruit et arriva à une espèce d'enfoncement triangulaire pratiqué sous l'escalier on pour mieux dire formé par l'escalier même. Cet enfoncement n'était autre chose que

le dessous des marches. Là, parmi toutes sortes de vieux paniers et de vieux tessous, dans la poussière et dans les toiles d'araignée, il y avait un lit; si l'on peut appeler lit une pailleasse trouée jusqu'à montrer la paille et une couverture trouée jusqu'à laisser voir la pailleasse. Point de draps. Cela était posé à terre sur le carreau. Dans ce lit Cosette dormait.

L'homme s'approcha, et la considéra.

Cosette dormait profondément, elle était toute habillée. L'hiver elle ne se dishabillait pas pour avoir moins froid.

Elle tenait serrée contre elle la poupée dont les grands yeux ouverts brillaient dans obscurité. De temps en temps elle poussait un grand soupir comme si elle allait se réveiller, et elle étreignait la poupée dans ses bras presque convulsivement. Il n'y avait à côté de son lit qu'un de ses sabots.

Une porte ouverte près du galetas de Cosette laissait voir une assez grande chambre sombre. L'étranger y pénétra. Au fond, à travers une porte vitrée, on apercevait deux petits lits jumeaux très blancs. C'étaient ceux d'Azelma et d'Eponine. Derrière ces lits disparaissait à demi un berceau d'osier sans rideaux où dormait le petit garçon qui avait crié toute le soirée.

L'étranger conjectura que cette chambre communiquait avec celle des époux Thenardier. Il allait se retirer quand son regard encontre la chemi-



nées d'auberge où il y a toujours un sit petit feu, quand il y a de feu, il n'y avait pas même de cendre; ce qui y était attira pourtant l'attention du voyageur. C'étaient deux petits souliers d'enfant de forme coquette et de grandeur inégale; le voyageur se rappela la gracieuse et immémoriale coutume des enfants qui déposent leur chaussure dans la cheminée le jour de Noël pour y attendre dans les ténèbres quelque étincelant cadeau de luer bonne fée. Eponine et Azelma n'avaient en garde d'y manquer, et elles avaient mis chacune un de leurs souliers dans la cheminée.

La voyageur se pencha.

La fée, c'est-a-dire la mère, avait déjà fait sa visite, et l'on voyait reluire dans chaque soulier une belle pièce de dix sous toute neuve.

L'homme se relevait et allait s'en aller lorsqu'il aperçut au fond, à l'écart, dans la coin le plus obscur de l'âtre, un autre objet. Il regarda, et reconnut un sabot, un affreux sabot du bois le plus grossier, à demi brisé et tout couvert de cendre et de boue dessechée. C'était le sabot de Cosette. Cosette, avec cette touchante confiance des enfants qui peut être trompée toujours sans se décourager jamais, avait mis, elle aussi, son sabot dans la cheminée.

C'est une chose sublime et douce que L'esperance dans un enfant qui n'a jamais connu que le désespoir.

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Il n'y avait rien dans ce sabot.

L'étranger fouilla dans son gilet, se courba et mit dans le sabot de Cosette un louis d'or.

Puis il regagna sa chambre à pas de loup.

VICTOR HUGO, *Les Misérables*



“Ah, if there’s good anywhere, we’ve need of it,” repeated Dolly, who did not lightly forsake a serviceable phrase. She looked at Silas pityingly as she went on. “But you didn’t hear the church-bells this morning, Master Marner? I doubt you didn’t know it was Sunday. Living so lone here, you lose your count, I daresay; and then, when

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your loom makes a noise, you can't hear the bells, more partic'lar now the frost kills the sound."

"Yes, I did; I heard 'em," said Silas, to whom Sunday bells were a mere accident of the day, and not part of its sacredness. There had been no bells in Lantern Yard.

"Dear heart!" said Dolly, pausing before she spoke again. "But what a pity it is you should work of a Sunday, and not clean yourself—if you *didn't* go to church; for if you'd a roasting bit, it might be as you couldn't leave it, being a lone man. But there's the bakehus, if you could make up your mind to spend a twopence on the oven now and then,—not every week, in course—I shouldn't like to do that myself,—you might carry your bit o' dinner there, for it's nothing but right to have a bit o' summat hot of a Sunday, and not to make it as you can't know your dinner from Saturday. But now, upo' Christmas-day, this blessed Christmas as is ever coming, if you was to take your dinner to the bakehus, and go to church, and see the holly and the yew, and hear the anthem, and then take the sacramen', you'd be a deal the better, and you'd know which end you stood on, and you could put your trust i' Them as knows better nor we do, seein' you'd ha' done what it lies on us all to do."

Dolly's exhortation, which was an unusually long effort of speech for her, was uttered in the soothing persuasive tone with which she tried to

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prevail on a sick man to take his medicine, or a basin of gruel for which he had no appetite. Silas had never before been closely urged on the point of his absence from church, which had only been thought of as a part of his general queerness; and he was too direct and simple to evade Dolly's appeal.

"Nay, nay," he said, "I know nothing o' church. I've never been to church."

"No!" said Dolly, in a low tone of wonderment. Then, bethinking herself of Silas's advent from an unknown country, she said, "Could it ha' been as they'd no church where you was born?"

"O yes," said Silas, meditatively, sitting in his usual posture of leaning on his knees, and supporting his head. "There was churches—a many—it was a big town. But I knew nothing of 'em—I went to chapel."

Dolly was much puzzled at this new word, but she was rather afraid of inquiring further, lest "chapel" might mean some haunt of wickedness. After a little thought, she said—

"Well, Master Marner, it's niver too late to turn over a new leaf, and if you've niver had no church, there's no telling the good it'll do you. For I feel so set up and comfortable as niver was, when I've been and heard the prayers, and the singing to the praise and glory o' God, as Mr. Macey gives out—and Mr Crackenthorp saying good words, and more partic'lar on Sacramen'

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Day; and if a bit o' trouble comes, I feel as I can put up wi' it, for I've looked for help i' the right quarter, and gev myself up to Them as we must all give ourselves up to at the last; and if we'n done our part, it isn't to be believed as Them as are above us 'ull be worse nor we are, and come short o' Their'n."

Poor Dolly's exposition of her simple Raveloe theology fell rather unmeaningly on Silas's ears, for there was no word in it that could rouse a memory of what he had known as religion, and his comprehension was quite baffled by the plural pronoun, which was no heresy of Dolly's, but only her way of avoiding a presumptuous familiarity. He remained silent, not feeling inclined to assent to the part of Dolly's speech which he fully understood—her recommendation that he should go to church. Indeed, Silas was so unaccustomed to talk beyond the brief questions and answers necessary for the transaction of his simple business, that words did not easily come to him without the urgency of a distinct purpose.

But now, little Aaron, having become used to the weaver's awful presence, had advanced to his mother's side, and Silas, seeming to notice him for the first time, tried to return Dolly's signs of goodwill by offering the lad a bit of lard-cake. Aaron shrank back a little, and rubbed his head against his mother's shoulder, but still thought the

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piece of cake worth the risk of putting his hand out for it.

“O for shame, Aaron,” said his mother, taking him on her lap, however; “why, you don’t want cake again yet awhile. He’s wonderful hearty,” she went on, with a little sigh—“that he is, God knows. He’s my youngest, and we spoil him sadly, for either me or the father must allays hev him in our sight—that we must.”

She stroked Aaron’s brown head, and thought it must do Master Marner good to see such a “picture of a child.” But Marner, on the other side of the hearth, saw the neat-featured rosy face as a mere dim round, with two dark spots in it.

“And he’s got a voice like a bird—you wouldn’t think,” Dolly went on; “he can sing a Christmas carril as his father’s taught him; and I take it for a token as he’ll come to good, as he can learn the good tunes so quick. Come, Aaron, stan’ up and sing the carril to Master Marner, come.”

Aaron replied by rubbing his forehead against his mother’s shoulder.

“O, that’s naughty,” said Dolly, gently. “Stan’ up, when mother tells you, and let me hold the cake till you’ve done.”

Aaron was not indisposed to display his talents, even to an ogre, under protecting circumstances; and after a few more signs of coyness, consisting chiefly in rubbing the backs of his hands over his eyes, and then peeping between them at Master

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Marner, to see if he looked anxious for 'the "carril," he at length allowed his head to be duly adjusted, and standing behind the table, which let him appear above it only as far as his broad frill, so that he looked like a cherubic head untroubled with a body, he began with a clear chirp, and in a melody that had the rhythm of an industrious hammer—

“God rest you, merry gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas-day.”

Dolly listened with a devout look, glancing at Marner in some confidence that this strain would help to allure him to church.

“That’s Christmas music,” she said, when Aaron had ended, and had secured his piece of cake again. “There’s no other music equil to the Christmas music—‘Hark the erol angils sing.’ And you may judge what it is at church, Master Marner, with the bassoon and the voices, as you can’t help thinking you’ve got to a better place a’ready—for I wouldn’t speak ill o’ this world, seeing as Them put us in it as knows best—but what wi’ the drink, and the quarrelling, and the bad illnesses, and the hard dying, as I’ve seen times and times, one’s thankful to hear of a better. The boy sings pretty, don’t he, Master Marner?”

“Yes,” said Silas, absently, “very pretty.”



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The Christmas carol, with its hammer-like rhythm, had fallen on his ears as strange music, quite unlike a hymn, and could have none of the effect Dolly contemplated. But he wanted to show her that he was grateful, and the only mode that occurred to him was to offer Aaron a bit more cake.

“O no, thank you, Master Marner,” said Dolly, holding down Aaron’s willing hands. “We must be going home now. And so I wish you good-bye, Master Marner; and if you ever feel anyways bad in your inside, as you can’t fend for yourself, I’ll come and clean up for you, and get you a bit o’ victual, and willing. But I beg and pray of you to leave off weaving of a Sunday, for it’s bad for soul and body—and the money as comes i’ that way ’ull be a bad bed to lie down on at the last, if it doesn’t fly away, nobody knows where, like the white frost. And you’ll excuse me being that free with you, Master Marner, for I wish you well—I do. Make your bow, Aaron.”

Silas said “Good-bye, and thank you kindly,” as he opened the door for Dolly, but he couldn’t help feeling relieved when she was gone—relieved that he might weave again and moan at his ease. Her simple view of life and its comforts, by which she had tried to cheer him, was only like a report of unknown objects, which his imagination could not fashion. The fountains of human love and of faith in a divine love had not yet been unlocked,

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and his soul was still the shrunken rivulet, with only this difference, that its little groove of sand was blocked up, and it wandered confusedly against dark obstruction.

And so, notwithstanding the honest persuasions of Mr. Macey and Dolly Winthrop, Silas spent his Christmas-day in loneliness, eating his meat in sadness of heart, though the meat had come to him as a neighbourly present. In the morning he looked out on the black frost that seemed to press cruelly on every blade of grass, while the half-icy red pool shivered under the bitter wind; but towards evening the snow began to fall, and curtained from him even that dreary outlook, shutting him close up with his narrow grief. And he sat in his robbed home through the livelong evening, not caring to close his shutters or lock his door, pressing his head between his hands and moaning, till the cold grasped him and told him that his fire was grey.

Nobody in this world but himself knew that he was the same Silas Marner who had once loved his fellow with tender love, and trusted in an unseen goodness. Even to himself that past experience had become dim.

But in Raveloe village the bells rang merrily, and the church was fuller than all through the rest of the year, with red faces among the abundant dark-green boughs—faces prepared for a longer service than usual by an odorous breakfast

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of toast and ale. Those green boughs, the hymn and anthem never heard but at Christmas—even the Athanasian Creed, which was discriminated from the others only as being longer and of exceptional virtue, since it was only read on rare occasions—brought a vague exulting sense, for which the grown men could as little have found words as the children, that something great and mysterious had been done for them in heaven above and in earth below, which they were appropriating by their presence. And then the red faces made their way through the black biting frost to their own homes, feeling themselves free for the rest of the day to eat, drink, and be merry, and using that Christian freedom without diffidence.

At Squire Cass's family party that day nobody mentioned Dunstan—nobody was sorry for his absence, or feared it would be too long. The doctor and his wife, uncle and aunt Kimble, were there, and the annual Christmas talk was carried through without any omissions, rising to the climax of Mr. Kimble's experience when he walked the London hospitals thirty years back, together with striking professional anecdotes then gathered. Whereupon cards followed, with aunt Kimble's annual failure to follow suit, and uncle Kimble's irascibility concerning the odd trick which was rarely explicable to him, when it was not on his side, without a general visitation of tricks to see that they were formed on sound principles: the whole

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being accompanied by a strong steaming odour of spirits-and-water.

But the party on Christmas-day, being a strictly family party, was not the pre-eminently brilliant celebration of the season at the Red House. It was the great dance on New Year's Eve that made the glory of Squire Cass's hospitality, as of his forefather's, time out of mind. This was the occasion when all the society of Raveloe and Tarley, whether old acquaintances separated by long rutty distances, or cooled acquaintances separated by misunderstandings concerning runaway calves, or acquaintances founded on intermittent condescension, counted on meeting and on comporting themselves with mutual appropriateness. This was the occasion on which fair dames who came on pillions sent their bandboxes before them, supplied with more than their evening costume; for the feast was not to end with a single evening, like a paltry town entertainment, where the whole supply of eatables is put on the table at once, and bedding is scanty. The Red House was provisioned for a siege; and as for the spare featherbeds ready to be laid on floors, they were as plentiful as might naturally be expected in a family that had killed its own geese for many generations.

Godfrey Cass was looking forward to this New Year's Eve with a foolish reckless longing, that made him half deaf to his importunate companion, Anxiety.

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"Dunsey will be coming home soon: there will be a great blow-up, and how will you bribe his spite to silence?" said Anxiety.

"O, he won't come home before New Year's Eve, perhaps," said Godfrey; "and I shall sit by Nancy then, and dance with her, and get a kind look from her in spite of herself."

"But money is wanted in another quarter," said Anxiety, in a louder voice, "and how will you get it without selling your mother's diamond pin? And if you don't get it. . . ?"

"Well, but something may happen to make things easier. At any rate, there's one pleasure for me close at hand: Nancy is coming."

"Yes, and suppose your father should bring matters to a pass that will oblige you to decline marrying her—and to give your reasons?"

"Hold your tongue, and don't worry me. I can see Nancy's eyes, just as they will look at me, and feel her hand in mine already."

But Anxiety went on, though in noisy Christmas company; refusing to be utterly quieted even by much drinking.

GEORGE ELIOT, *Silas Marner*

*OLD CHRISTMASTIDE*

Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;  
But let it whistle as it will,  
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.  
Each age has deemed the new-born year  
The fittest time for festal cheer.  
Even heathen yet, the savage Dane  
At Iol more deep the mead did drain;  
High on the beach his galley drew,  
And feasted all his pirate crew;  
Then in his low and pine-built hall,  
Where shields and axes decked the wall,  
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer;  
Caroused in seas of sable beer;  
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown  
The half-gnawed rib and marrow-bone,  
Or listened all, in grim delight,  
While scalds yelled out the joy of fight,  
Then forth in frenzy would they hie,  
While wildly loose their red locks fly;  
And, dancing round the blazing pile,  
They make such barbarous mirth the while,  
As best might to the mind recall  
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.  
And well our Christian sire of old  
Loved when the year its course had rolled,  
And brought blithe Christmas back again,  
With all his hospitable train.

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Domestic and religious rite  
Gave honour to the holy night:  
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;  
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;  
That only night, in all the year,  
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.  
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;  
The hall was dressed with holly green;  
Forth to the wood did merry men go,  
To gather in the mistletoe;  
Then opened wide the baron's hall  
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;  
Power laid his rod of rule aside,  
And ceremony doffed his pride.  
The heir, with roses in his shoes,  
That night might village partner choose;  
The lord, underogating, share  
The vulgar game of "post and pair."  
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,  
And general voice, the happy night  
That to the cottage, as the crown,  
Brought tidings of salvation down.  
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Went roaring up the chimney wide;  
The huge hall-table's oaken face,  
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,  
Bore then upon its massive board  
No mark to part the squire and lord.  
Then was brought in the lusty brawn  
By old blue-coated serving man;



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Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,  
Crested with bays and rosemary.  
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,  
How, when, and where the monster fell;  
What dogs before his death he tore,  
And all the baiting of the boar.  
The Wassail round, in good brown bowls,  
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.  
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by  
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;  
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,  
At such high tide, her savoury goose.  
Then came the merry masquers in,  
And carols roared with blithesome din;  
If unmelodious was the song,  
It was a hearty note, and strong,  
Who lists may in their mumming see  
Traces of ancient mystery;  
White shirts supplied the masquerade,  
And smutted cheeks the vizors made:  
But, what masquers, richly dight,  
Can boast of bosoms half so light?  
England was merry England, when  
Old Christmas brought his sports again.  
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;  
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;  
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
The poor man's heart through half the year.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

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Then stood the realm in great jeopardy long while, for every lord that was mighty of men made him strong, and many weened to be king. Then Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and counselled him for to send for all the lords of the realm, and all the gentlemen of arms, that they should to London come by Christmas, upon pain of cursing; and for this cause, that Jesus, that was born on that night, that he would of his great mercy show some miracle, as he was come to be King of mankind, for to show some miracle who should be rightways king of this realm. So the Archbishop, by the advice of Merlin, sent for all the lords and gentlemen of arms that they should come by Christmas even unto London. And many of them made them clean of their life, that their prayer might be the more acceptable unto God. So in the greatest church of London, whether it were Paul's or not the French book maketh no mention, all the estates were long or day in the church for to pray. And when Matins and the first Mass was done, there was seen in the church-yard, against the high altar, a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone, and in the midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stuck a

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fair sword naked by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword that said thus:

WHOSO PULLETH OUT THIS SWORD OF THIS STONE  
AND ANVIL, IS RIGHTWISE KING BORN  
OF ALL ENGLAND

Then the people marvelled, and told it to the Archbishop. I command, said the Archbishop, that ye keep you within your church, and pray unto God still; that no man touch the sword till the high Mass be all done. So when the Masses were done all the lords went to behold the stone and sword. And when they saw the scripture, some assayed; such as would have been king. But none might stir the sword nor move it. He is not here, said the Archbishop, that shall achieve the sword, but doubt not God will make him known. But this is my counsel, said the Archbishop, that we let purvey ten knights, men of good fame, and they to keep this sword. So it was ordained, and then there was made a cry, that every man should essay that would, for to win the sword. And upon every New Year's day the barons let make a jousts and a tournament, that all the knights that would joust or tourney there might play, and all this was ordained for to keep the lords and the commons together, for the Archbishop trusted that God would make him known that should win the sword. So upon New Year's day, when the service was

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done, the barons rode unto the field, some to joust and some to tourney, and so it happened that Sir Ector, that had great livelihood about London, rode unto the jousts, and with him rode Sir Kay his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished brother; and Sir Kay was made knight at All Hallowmass afore. So as they rode to the jousts-ward, Sir Kay had lost his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young Arthur for to ride for his sword. I will well, said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword, and when he came home, the lady and all were out to see the jousting. Then was Arthur wroth, and said to himself, I will ride to the church-yard, and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day. So when he came to the church-yard, Arthur alit and tied his horse to the stile, and so he went to the tent, and found no knights there, for they were at jousting; and so he handled the sword by the handles, and lightly and fiercely pulled it out of the stone, and took his horse and rode to his father Sir Ector, and said: Sir, lo here is the sword of the stone, wherefore I must be king of this land. When Sir Ector beheld the sword, he returned again and came to the church, and there they alit all three, and went into the church. And anon he made Sir Kay to swear upon a book how he came by that sword. Sir, said Sir Kay, by my brother Arthur, for he brought it to me. How gat ye

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this sword? said Sir Ector to Arthur. Sir, I will tell you. When I came home for my brother's sword, I found nobody at home to deliver me his sword, and so I thought my brother Sir Kay should not be swordless, and so I came hither eagerly and pulled it out of the stone without any pain. Found ye any knights about this sword? said Sir Ector. Nay, said Arthur. Now, said Sir Ector to Arthur, I understand ye must be king of this land. Wherefore I, said Arthur, and for what cause? Sir, said Ector, for God will have it so, for there should never a man have drawn out this sword, but that he shall be rightways king of this land. Now let me see whether ye can put the sword there as it was, and pull it out again. That is no mastery, said Arthur, and so he put it in the stone, therewithal Sir Ector essayed to pull out the sword and failed.

Now assay, said Sir Ector unto Sir Kay. And anon he pulled at the sword with all his might, but it would not be. Now shall ye essay, said Sir Ector unto Arthur. I will well, said Arthur, and pulled it out easily. And therewithal Sir Ector knelt down to the earth, and Sir Kay. Alas, said Arthur, my own dear father and brother, why kneel ye to me? Nay, nay, my lord Arthur, it is not so, I was never your father nor of your blood, but I wot well ye are of an higher blood than I weened ye were. And then Sir Ector told him all, how he was bitaken him for to nourish him, and

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by whose commandment, and by Merlin's deliverance.

. . . . .

Therewithal they went unto the Archbishop, and told him how the sword was achieved, and by whom; and on Twelfth Day all the barons came thither, and to essay to take the sword, who that would essay. But there afore them all, there might none take it out but Arthur.

SIR THOMAS MALORY,  
*Morte d'Arthur* (1470)



# LES TROIS MESSES BASSES

## CONTE DE NOËL

### I

—Deux dindes truffées, Garrigou? . . .

—Oui, mon révérend, deux dindes magnifiques, bourrées de truffes. J'en sais quelque chose, puisque c'est moi qui ai aidé à les remplir. On aurait dit que leur peau allait craquer en rôissant, tellement elle était tendue . . .

—Jésus-Maria! moi qui aime tant les truffes! . . . Donne-moi vite mon surplis, Garrigou. . . Et avec les dindes, qu'est-ce que tu as encore aperçu à la cuisine? . . .

—Oh! toutes sortes de bonnes choses. . . Depuis midi, nous n'avons fait que plumer des faisans, des huppes, des gelinottes, des coqs de bruyère. La plume en volait partout. . . Puis de l'étang on a apporté des anguilles, des carpes dorées, des truites, des. . .

—Grosses comment, les truites, Garrigou?

—Grosses comme ça, mon révérend. . . Enormes! . . .

—Oh! Dieu! il me semble que je les vois. . . As-tu mis vin dans les burettes?

—Oui, mon révérend, j'ai mis le vin dans les



burettes. . . Mais dame ! il ne vaut pas celui que vous boirez tout à l'heure en sortant de la messe de minuit. Si vous voyiez cela dans la salle à manger du château, toutes ces carafes qui flambent pleines de vins de toutes les couleurs ! . . . Et la vaisselle d'argent, les surtoutis ciselés, les fleurs, les candélabres ! . . . Jamais il ne se sera vu un réveillon pareil. M. le marquis a invité tous les seigneurs du voisinage. Vous serez au moins quarante à table, sans compter le bailli ni le tabellion. . . Ah ! vous êtes bien heureux d'en être, mon révérend ! . . . Rien que d'avoir flairé ces belles dindes, l'odeur des truffes me suit partout. . . Meuh ! . . .

—Allons, allons, mon enfant. Gardons-nous du péché de gourmandise, surtout la nuit de la Nativité. . . Va bien vite allumer les cierges et sonner le premier coup de la messe ; car voilà que minuit est proche, et il ne faut pas nous mettre en retard. . .

Cette conversation se tenait une nuit de Noël de l'an de grâce mil six cent et tant, entre le révérend dom Balaguère, ancien prieur des Barnabites, présentement chapelain gagé des sires de Trinquelague, et son petit clerc Garrigou, ou du moins ce qu'il croyait être le petit clerc Garrigou, car vous saurez que le diable, ce soir-là, avait pris la façon ronde et les traits indécis du jeune sacristain pour mieux induire le révérend père en tentation et lui faire commettre unépouvantable péché de gourmandise. Donc, pendant que le soi-disant

Garrigou (hum! hum!) faisait à tour de bras carillonner les cloches de la chapelle seigneuriale, le révérend achevait de revêtir sa chasuble dans la petite sacristie du château; et, l'esprit déjà troublé par toutes ces descriptions gastronomiques, il se répétait à lui-même en s'habillant:

—Des dindes rôties . . . des carpes dorées . . . des truites grosses comme ça! . . .

Dehors, le vent de la nuit soufflait, éparpillant la musique des cloches, et, à mesure, des lumières apparaissaient dans l'ombre aux flancs du mont Ventoux, en haut duquel s'élevaient les vieilles tours de Trinquelague. C'étaient des familles de métayers qui venaient entendre la messe de minuit au château. Ils grimpaient la côte en chantant par groupes de cinq ou six, le père en avant, la lanterne en main, les femmes enveloppées dans leurs grandes mantes brunes où les enfants se seraient et s'abritaient. Malgré l'heure et le froid, tout ce brave peuple marchait allègrement, soutenu par l'idée qu'au sortir de la messe il y aurait, comme tous les ans, table mise pour eux en bas, dans les cuisines. De temps en temps, sur la rude montée, le carrosse d'un seigneur, précédé de porteurs de torches, faisait miroiter ses glaces au clair de lune, ou bien une mule trottait en agitant ses sonnailles, et à la lueur des falots enveloppés de brume, les métayers reconnaissaient leur bailli et le saluaient au passage:

—Bonsoir, bonsoir, maître Arnoton!

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—Bonsoir, bonsoir, mes enfants!

La nuit était claire, les étoiles avivées de froid; la bise piquait, et un fin grésil, glissant sur les vêtements sans les mouiller, gardait fidèlement la tradition des Noël's blancs de neige. Tout en haut de la côte, le château apparaissait comme le but, avec sa masse énorme de tours, de pignons, le clocher de sa chapelle montant dans le ciel bleu noir, et une foule de petites lumières qui clignotaient, allaient, venaient, s'agitaient à toutes les fenêtres, et ressemblaient, sur le fond sombre du bâtiment, aux étincelles courant dans des cendres de papier brûlé. . . . Passé le pont-levis et la poterne, il fallait, pour se rendre à la chapelle, traverser la première cour, pleine de carrosses, de valets, de chaises à porteurs, toute claire du feu des torches et de la flambée des cuisines. On entendait le tintement des tournebroches, le fracas des casseroles, le choc des cristaux et de l'argenterie remués dans les apprêts d'un repas; par là-dessus, une vapeur tiède, qui sentait bon les chairs rôties et les herbes fortes des sauces compliquées, faisait dire aux métayers, comme au chapelain, comme au bailli, comme à tout le monde:

—Quel bon réveillon nous allons faire après la messe!

### II

Dreлиндin din! . . . Dreлиндin din! . . .

C'est la messe de minuit qui commence. Dans

la chapelle du château, une cathédrale en miniature, aux arceaux entre-croisés, aux boiseries de chêne, montant jusqu'à hauteur des murs, les tapisseries ont été tendues, tous les cierges allumés. Et que de monde ! Et que de toilettes ! Voici d'abord, assis dans les stalles sculptées qui entourent le chœur, le sire de Trinquelague en habit de taffetas saumon, et près de lui tous les nobles seigneurs invités. En face, sur des prie-Dieu garnis de velours, ont pris place la vieille marquise douairière dans sa robe de brocart couleur de feu, et la jeune dame de Trinquelague, coiffée d'une haute tour de dentelle gaufrée à la dernière mode de la cour de France. Plus bas on voit, vêtus de noir avec de vastes perruques en pointe et des visages rasés, le bailli Thomas Arnoton et le tabellion maître Ambroy, deux notes graves parmi les soies voyantes et les damas brochés. Puis viennent les gras majordomes, les pages, les piqueurs, les intendants, dame Barbe, toutes ses clefs pendues sur le côté à un clavier d'argent fin. Au fond, sur les bancs, c'est le bas office, les servantes, les métayers avec leurs familles ; et enfin, là-bas, tout contre la porte qu'ils entr'ouvrent et referment discrètement, messieurs les marmitons qui viennent entre deux sauces prendre un petit air de messe et apporter une odeur de réveillon dans l'église toute en fête et tiède de tant de cierges allumés.

Est-ce la vue de ces petites barrettes blanches qui

donne des distractions à l'officiant? Ne serait-ce pas plutôt la sonnette de Garrigou, cette enragée petite sonnette qui s'agite au pied de l'autel avec une précipitation infernale et semble dire toute le temps: "Dépêchons-nous, dépêchons-nous. . . Plus tôt nous aurons fini, plus tôt nous serons à table." Le fait est que chaque fois qu'elle tinte, cette sonnette du diable, le chapelain oublie sa messe et ne pense plus qu'au réveillon. Il se figure les cuisiniers en rumeur, les fourneaux où brûle un feu de forge, la buée qui monte des couvercles entr'ouverts, et dans cette buée deux dindes magnifiques, bourrées, tendues, marbrées de truffes. . .

Ou bien encore il voit passer des files de petits pages portant des plats enveloppés de vapeurs tentantes, et avec eux il entre dans la grande salle déjà prête pour le festin. O délices! voilà l'immense table toute chargée et flamboyante, les paons habillés de leurs plumes, les faisans écartant leurs ailes mordorées, les flacons couleur de rubis, les pyramides de fruits éclatants parmi les branches vertes, et ces merveilleux poissons dont parlait Garrigou (ah! bien oui, Garrigou!) étalés sur un lit de fenouil, l'écaille nacrée comme s'ils sortaient de l'eau, avec un bouquet d'herbes odorantes dans leurs narines de monstres. Si vive est la vision de ces merveilles, qu'il semble à dom Balaguère que tous ces plats mirifiques sont servis devant lui sur les broderies de la nappe d'autel, et deux ou trois

fois, au lieu du *Dominus vobiscum!* il se surprend à dire le *Benedicite*. A part ces élgères méprises, le digne homme débite son office très consciencieusement, sans passer une ligne, sans omettre une génuflexion; et tout marche assez bien jusqu'à la fin de la première messe; car vous savez que le jour de Noël le même officiant doit célébrer trois messes consécutives.

—Et d'une! se dit le chapelain avec un soupir de soulagement; puis, sans perdre une minute, il fait signe à son clerc ou celui qu'il croit être son clerc, et. . .

Drelindin din! . . . Drelindin din!

C'est la seconde messe qui commence, et avec elle commence aussi le péché de dom Balaguère.

—Vite, vite, dépêchons-nous, lui crie de sa petite voix aigrette la sonnette de Garrigou, et cette fois le malheureux officiant, tout abandonné au démon de gourmandise, se rue sur le missel et dévore les pages avec l'avidité de son appétit en surexcitation. Frénétiquement il se baisse, se relève, esquisse les signes de croix, les génuflexions, raccourcit tous ses gestes pour avoir plus tôt fini. A peine s'il étend ses bras à l'évangile, s'il frappe sa poitrine au *Confiteor*. Entre le clerc et lui c'est à qui bredouillera le plus vite. Versets et répons se précipitent, se bousculent. Les mots à moitié prononcés, sans ouvrir la bouche, ce qui prendrait trop de temps, s'achèvent en murmures incompréhensibles.

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*Oremus ps. . . ps. . . ps. . .*

*Mea culpa. . . pa. . . pa. . .*

Pareils à des vendangeurs pressés foulant le raisin de la cuve, tous deux barbotent dans le latin de la messe, en envoyant des éclaboussures de tous les côtés.

*Dom. . . scum! . . .* dit Balaguère.

. . . *Stutuo!* . . . répond Garrigou; et tout le temps la damnée petite sonnette est là qui tinte à leurs oreilles, comme ces grelots qu'on met aux chevaux de poste pour les faire galoper à la grande vitesse. Pensez que de ce train-là une messe basse est vite expédiée.

—Et de deux! dit le chapelain tout essoufflé; puis sans prendre le temps de respirer, rouge, suant, il dégringole les marches de l'autel et. . .

*Drelindin din! . . . Drelindin din! . . .*

C'est la troisième messe qui commence. Il n'y a plus que quelques pas à faire pour arriver à la salle à manger; mais, hélas! à mesure que le réveillon approche, l'infortuné Balaguère se sent pris d'une folie d'impatience et de gourmandise. Sa vision s'accroît, les carpes dorées, les dindes rôties sont là, là. . . Il les touche. . . il les. . . Oh! Dieu! . . . Les plats fument, les vins embaument; et, secouant son grelot enragé, la petite sonnette lui crie:

—Vite, vite, encore plus vite! . . .

Mais comment pourrait-il aller plus vite? Ses



lèvres remuent à peine. Il ne prononce plus les mots. . . A moins de tricher tout à fait le bon Dieu et de lui escamoter sa messe. . . Et c'est ce qu'il fait, le malheureux! . . . De tentation en tentation, il commence par sauter un verset, puis deux. Puis l'épître est trop longue, il ne la finit pas, effleure l'évangile, passe devant le *Credo* sans entrer, saute le *Pater*, salue de loin la préface, et par bonds et par élans se précipite ainsi dans la damnation éternelle, toujours suivi de l'infâme Garrigou (*vade retro, Satanas!*) qui le seconde avec une merveilleuse entente, lui relève sa chasuble, tourne les feuillets deux par deux, bouscule les pupitres, renverse les burettes, et sans cesse secoue la petite sonnette de plus en plus fort, de plus en plus vite.

Il faut voir la figure effarée que font tous les assistants! Obligés de suivre à la mimique du prêtre cette messe dont ils n'entendent pas un mot, les uns se lèvent quand les autres s'agenouillent, s'asseyent quand les autres sont debout; et toutes les phases de ce singulier office se confondent sur les bancs dans une foule d'attitudes diverses. L'étoile de Noël en route dans les chemins du ciel, là-bas, vers la petite étable, pâlit d'épouvante en voyant cette confusion. . .

—L'abbé va trop vite. . . On ne peut pas suivre, murmure la vieille douairière en agitant sa coiffe avec égarement. Maître Arnoton, ses

grandes lunettes d'acier sur le nez, cherche dans son paroissien où diantre on peut bien en être. Mais au fond, tous ces braves gens, qui eux aussi pensent à réveillonner, ne sont pas fâchés que la messe aille ce train de poste; et quand dom Balaguère, la figure rayonnante, se tourne vers l'assistance en criant de toutes ses forces: *Ite, missa est*, il n'y a qu'une voix dans la chapelle pour lui répondre un *Deo gratias* si joyeux, si entraînant, qu'on se croirait déjà à table au premier toast du réveillon.

## III

Cinq minutes après, la foule des seigneurs s'asseyait dans la grande salle, le chapelain au milieu d'eux. Le château, illuminé du haut en bas, retentissait de chants, de cris, de rires, de rumeurs; et le vénérable dom Balaguère plantait sa fourchette dans une aile de gelinotte, noyant le remords de son péché sous des flots de vin du pape et de bons jus de viandes. Tant il but et mangea, le pauvre saint homme, qu'il mourut dans la nuit, d'une terrible attaque, sans avoir eu seulement le temps de se repentir, puis au matin, il arriva dans le ciel encore tout en rumeur des fêtes de la nuit, et je vous laisse à penser comme il y fut reçu.

—Retire-toi de mes yeux, mauvais chrétien! lui dit le souverain Juge, notre maître à tous. Ta faute est assez grande pour effacer toute une vie

de vertu. . . Ah! tu m'as volé une messe de nuit. . . Eh bien! tu m'en payeras trois cents en place, et tu n'entreras en paradis que quand tu auras célébré dans ta propre chapelle ces trois cents messes de Noël en présence de tous ceux qui ont péché par ta faute et avec toi. . .

. . . Et voilà la vraie légende de dom Balaguère comme on la raconte au pays des olives. Aujourd'hui le château de Trinquelague n'existe plus, mais la chapelle se tient encore droite, tout en haut de mont Ventoux, dans un bouquet de chènes verts. Le vent fait battre sa porte disjointe, l'herbe encombre le seuil; il y a des nids aux angles de l'autel et dans l'embrasure des hautes croisées dont les vitraux coloriés ont disparu depuis longtemps. Cependant il paraît que tous les ans, à Noël, une lumière surnaturelle erre parmi ces ruines, et qu'en allant aux messes et aux réveillons, les paysans aperçoivent ce spectre de chapelle éclairé de cierges invisibles qui brûlent au grand air, même sous la neige et le vent. Vous en rirez si vous voulez, mais un vigneron de l'endroit, nommé Garrigue, sans doute un descendant de Garrigou, m'a affirmé qu'un soir de Noël, se trouvant un peu en ribote, il s'était perdu dans la montagne du côté de Trinquelague; et voici ce qu'il avait vu. . . Jusqu'à onze heures, rien. Tout était silencieux, éteint, inanimé. Soudain, vers minuit, un carillon sonna tout en haut du clocher, un vieux, vieux carillon qui

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

avait l'air d'être à dix lieues. Bientôt, dans le chemin qui monte, Garrigue vit trembler des feux, s'agiter des ombres indécises. Sous le porche de la chapelle, on marchait, on chuchotait :

—Bonsoir, maître Arnoton!

—Bonsoir, bonsoir, mes enfants! . . .

Quand tout le monde fut entré, mon vigneron, qui était très brave, s'approcha doucement et, regardant par la porte cassée, eut un singulier spectacle. Tous ces gens qu'il avait vus passer étaient rangés autour du chœur, dans la nef en ruine, comme si les anciens bancs existaient encore. De belles dames en brocart avec des coiffes de dentelle, des seigneurs chamarrés du haut en bas, des paysans en jaquettes fleuries ainsi qu'en avaient nos grands-pères, tous l'air vieux, fané, poussiéreux, fatigué. De temps en temps, des oiseaux de nuit, hôtes habituels de la chapelle, réveillés par toutes ces lumières, venaient rôder autour des ciergues dont la flamme montait droite et vague comme si elle avait brûlé derrière une gaze; et ce qui amusait beaucoup Garrigue, c'était un certain personnage à grandes lunettes d'acier, qui secouait à chaque instant sa haute perruque noire sur laquelle un de ces oiseaux se tenait droit tout empêtré en battant silencieusement des ailes. . .

Dans le fond, un petit vieillard de taille enfantine, à genoux au milieu du chœur, agitait désespérément une sonnette sans grelots et sans voix,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

pendant qu'un prêtre habillé de vieil or allait, venait devant l'autel en récitant des oraisons dont on n'entendait pas un mot. . . Bien sûr c'était dom Balaguère, en train de dire sa troisième messe basse.

ALPHONSE DAUDET



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *CHRISTMAS AT SEA*

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the  
naked hand;

The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce  
could stand,

The wind was a nor'-wester, blowing squally off  
the sea;

And the cliffs and spouting breakers were the only  
things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break  
of day;

But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how  
ill we lay.

We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a  
shout,

And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to  
go about.

All day we tack'd and tack'd between the South  
Head and the North;

All day we haul'd the frozen sheets, and got no  
further forth;

All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,  
For very life and nature we tack'd from head to  
head,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the  
tide-race roar'd;

But every tack we made we brought the North  
Head close aboard;

So's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the break-  
ers running high,

And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass  
against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as  
ocean foam;

The good red fires were burning bright in every  
'longshore home;

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys  
volley'd out;

And I vow we sniff'd the victuals as the vessel  
went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a right  
jovial cheer;

For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days  
in the year)

This day of our adversity was blessèd Christmas  
morn,

And the house above the coastguard's was the house  
where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces  
there,

My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver  
hair;



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of  
homely elves

Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon  
the shelves!

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk  
that was of me,

Of the shadow on the household and the son that  
went to sea;

And O the wicked fool I seem'd, in every kind  
of way,

To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd  
Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to  
fall.

'All hands to loose topgallant sails.' I heard the  
captain call.

'By the Lord, she'll never stand it,' our first mate  
Jackson cried.

. . . 'It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson,'  
he replied.

She stagger'd to her bearings, but the sails were  
new and good,

And the ship smelt up to windward just as though  
she understood.

As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of  
the night,

We clear'd the weary headland, and pass'd below  
the light.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on  
board but me,  
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out  
to sea;  
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and  
the cold,  
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks  
were growing old.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



### *THE SACRILEGIOUS CAROLLERS*

Full ill shall it be in churchyard to dance,  
This same will I show ye by sore mischance—  
And this tale, so I swear to thee, is truth,  
Yea, as Gospel lore, so shall it be sooth—

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And it happened here, in this very land,  
Yea, here in this England, I understand;  
In the days of a king men called Edward  
It befell, this chance that was wondrous hard.

For so it fell out, on a Christmas Night,  
That twelve foolish folk would a carol dight,  
Yea, in fashion mad, as in strife it were,  
To the town of Colbek they needs must fare;  
Therein was a church which was fair and great,  
To St. Magnus the Martyr 't was dedicate,  
With St. Buckcestre joined, for she, I ween,  
Had sister unto St. Magnus been.  
The dancers' names, they be written all,  
Of some shall ye learn how men did them call—  
Gerlew, was he hight, the leader, 't was he  
Set the time of their dance, and made the glee;  
And maidens twain were that band within,  
Merswynde were they called, and Wybessyne.  
Thus to Colbek the dancers their way had ta'en  
To seek the priest's daughter they there were fain;  
The priest was hight Robert—he had a son,  
And as I have read, he was named Ayone,  
And his sister, she whom the band did crave  
To join in the Carol, was known as Ave.  
Then counsel the dancers held withal  
Who that maiden forth from the house should call,  
The council, I trow, they were of one mind  
They would send Wybessyne, and maid Mers-  
wynde.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Straightway went the women, and brought her out,  
To carol with them the churchyard about.

Bevis was the dancer who led the ring,  
While Gerlew, he wrote what they all should sing,  
And this was the carol the dancers sung  
As men found it writ in the Latin tongue—  
“Equitabat Bevo per silvam frondosam,  
Ducebat secum Merswyndam formosam—  
Quid stamus, cur non imus?”

“Bevis he rode thro’ the leafy glade,  
He led with him Merswynde, the lovely maid—  
Why stand we here? Why go we not?”  
This the carol that Gerlew wrote, I wot.

So sang they in the churchyard there,  
Nor fear for their folly in heart they bare,  
But they sang till the Mattins all were done,  
And ’t was time for the Mass to be begun;  
The priest, he vested him for the Mass,  
But never a whit they danced the less,  
As they begun, so they danced away,  
Nor e’en for the Mass did they think to stay.  
The priest at the altar, he needs must hear  
The noise, and the dance, that were all too near;  
From the altar down stepped the priest so good,  
And without the door, ’neath the porch, he stood,  
And he quoth: “In God’s Name, now take ye heed,  
I forbid ye all, longer to do such deed,  
But in fashion seemly now draw anear,  
And come into the church, the Mass to hear.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Of Christian folk shall ye keep the law,  
Nor longer carol—have Christ in awe,  
And worship Him now with all your might  
Who once of a Virgin was born this night.”  
But for all his bidding they stayed them naught,  
But danced on ever, as was their thought.  
The priest for that was full sorely grieved,  
And he prayed to God, on Whom he believed,  
That, for Magnus the Martyr, since in his name  
The church was founded, to guard His fame,  
And such vengeance upon the dancers send  
Ere yet they might forth from the churchyard  
wend,

That their song, and their carol, should ever last  
Until that the twelvemonth be overpast—  
(But I trow, in Latin the writing bore  
Not “a twelvemonth” only, but “evermore.”)  
Thus on each one singly the curse he laid  
The while that dancing, they merry made.  
And soon as the words from his lips had passed  
The hands of the dancers were locked full fast,  
That never a man, for spell, or wonder,  
For a twelvemonth might part their clasp asunder.

The priest went home when the Mass was done,  
And straightway hath bidden Ayone, his son,  
His sister Ave, without more delay,  
Forthwith from the Carol to bring that day.  
But all too late he the words had said,  
For the curse on them all was straitly laid.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Ayone, he did after his father's rede,  
And unto that Carol he went with speed,  
His sister he fast by the arm did take  
When lo! the arm from the body brake!

All wondered that marvel to behold,  
But a greater marvel shall now be told,  
For altho' the arm in his hand he bore,  
The body, it danced on ever more,  
And neither the body, nor e'en the arm,  
Shed a drop of blood, were it cold, or warm,  
But the muscle and bone were as dry to see  
As a stick that is broken from a tree.

Ayone, he would back to his father fare,  
And a sorry present he brought him there:  
"Look, Father," he quoth, "see I bring thee here  
Her arm who was once thy daughter dear,  
Who was, of aforetime, my sister Ave—  
I went thither intent the maid to save,  
But thy curse hath fallen, as may be seen,  
On thy very flesh and blood, I ween!  
All too bitter thy curse, and all too soon—  
Thou didst pray for vengeance, thou hast thy  
boon!"

Small need to ask me if sorrow sore  
Fell on the priest, and on many more!

The priest who had cursed thus that evil dance,  
On himself, and his folk there fell mischance;  
He hath taken his daughter's arm, forlorn,  
And hath buried it on the morrow's morn—

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

But the very next day, that arm of Ave,  
He hath found it lying above the grave!  
Once more was it buried, the self-same day,  
On the morrow, without the grave it lay;  
A third time the arm, it was buried low,  
And again the ground it forth did throw.  
The priest, he dare bury that arm no more,  
For the dread of God's vengeance oppressed him  
sore,

But into the church did he bear that arm  
In dread, and in doubting of further harm,  
Ordaining that it in such place should be  
That all men with eye might the marvel see.  
The dancers who carolled there in that band,  
Thro' the whole year round, hand fast in hand,  
Forth from that place might they never go,  
For no man might lead them the churchyard fro';  
Where first in the curse's fetter bound,  
In that self-same spot did they dance their round,  
Nor pain nor weariness did they know,  
Such as falls to folk who too far shall go.  
They stayed them not, or for meat, or drink;  
And never they slept, not a passing wink;  
Were it day, were it night, they noted none,  
For they knew not whether 't was come, or gone;  
Neither frost nor snow, neither hail nor rain,  
Neither cold nor heat it might bring them pain.  
Their hair nor their nails, ne'er a whit they grew,  
Nor faded their clothes, and changed in hue;



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thunder nor lightning, it vexed them not,  
God's Mercy, it sheltered them well, I wot,  
They sang aye the song that the woe had wrought—  
“Why stand we? Why go we naught?”  
I trow ne'er a man should living be  
Who such marvel were not full fain to see.  
The Emperor, Henry, he came from Rome,  
He was fain to behold this dance of doom,  
But when he had seen it, full bitterly  
Did he weep, to behold such misery;  
He bade his carpenters build full fast  
A roof that should shelter them from the blast,  
But all in vain was the work they wrought,  
For unto an end might it ne'er be brought,  
That which they builded within one day  
At dawn of another, on ground it lay,  
Once, twice, a third time, the roof they wrought,  
But for all their making it came to naught,  
From the cold they should never covered be  
Till in Christ's own time they should Mercy see.  
And that time of Grace came, by God's great  
    Might,  
At the twelvemonth end, on that same Yule night,  
At the self-same hour that the dance was banned,  
At that very hour they loosed their hand;  
At the self-same hour that the curse he spake  
At the very hour the ring it brake;  
Then, e'en in the twinkling of an eye,  
Straight to the church did the dancers fly,  
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## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And all, on the pavement they fell adown,  
And lay as men dead, or in a swoon.  
Three days did they lie, as still as stone,  
And never they moved, nor in flesh nor bone,  
And then when the three days' course was run  
To life hath God brought them, every one,  
Upright they sat them, and all men heard  
How to Robert the priest they spake this word:  
“ 'T is thou art the author and cause withal  
Of the penance long which did on us fall,  
The maker thou wert of our travail sore  
That full many a man hath marvelled o'er,  
And by travail too shalt thou find thine end,  
For soon to thy long home shalt thou wend!”

Then rose they up, on the self-same day,  
Save Ave, she, lifeless, beside them lay—  
Her father and brother great mourning made,  
And wonder and dread on all men were laid,  
Her soul, they deemed it was safe that stead,  
But they needs must mourn o'er the body dead.  
I trow that the first by her side to lie  
Was her father, the priest, in veritie.  
The arm that had once belonged to Ave,  
Since it ne'er might lie quiet in the grave,  
The Emperor bade that a shrine be made  
Therein, in the church, should it be displayed,  
That all men might look thereupon, and see,  
And think of the dance and its penaltie.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Those men that had carolled, a godless band,  
Thro' the whole year long, hand fast locked in  
hand,

Tho' at last their ring, it asunder brake,  
Yet the world it still of that wonder spake,  
For e'en as they, springing, the carol led,  
So, dancing, from land to land they sped;  
As aforetime they never might now be found,  
For never, I trow, an it were but twain,  
To one place, at one time, they came again!

To the court of Rome four, methinks, did go,  
Ever hopping and springing to and fro,  
With leaps and bounds did they get them thither,  
But never, I trow, did they come together;  
Their clothes ware not out, and their nails ne'er  
grew;

Their hair waxed not long, nor hath changed in  
hue;

Nor cure might they find for their sore complaint  
At the shrine, so 't is said, of any Saint,  
Save but at S. Edith's, the virgin pure,  
There they say that S. Theodrich found a cure,  
On Our Lady's Day, in a Lenten tide,  
E'en as he slumbered, her tomb beside,  
He found there the medicine he sore did crave,  
At S. Edith's, the holy virgin's grave.

Now Bruno, the bishop of S. Toulous,  
He hath written this tale so marvellous,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Sithen, did he win him a greater fame,  
For as Leo, the Pope, all men know his name.

Even there, at the court of Rome, to wit,  
In the chronicles shall ye find it writ.  
And in many places beyond the sea  
It is better known than in this countrie,  
And therefore the saying, it goes abroad,  
"The nearer the church, the further from God."  
And in different wise the tale doth fare,  
For some for a fiction that same declare,  
While in other places they hold it dear,  
And the marvel be ever fain to hear.  
But the tale doth examples twain rehearse:  
For first, 't is a warning against a curse;  
And again, it should teach ye to fear this thing,  
In church, or in churchyard, to dance and sing;  
Still less shall ye do it against the will  
Of the priest, if he bid ye cease, be still!

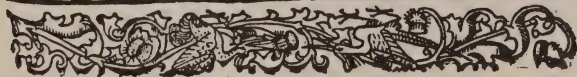
From Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*







Anno domini primo.



THE STAR SONG: A CAROLL TO THE  
KING; SUNG AT WHITE-HALL

*The flourish of Musick; then followed the Song.*

1. Tell us, thou cleere and heavenly Tongue,  
Where is the Babe but lately sprung?  
Lies He the Lillie-banks among?

2. Or say, if this new Birth of ours  
Sleeps, laid within some Ark of Flowers,  
Spangled with dew-light; thou canst cleere  
All doubts, and manifest the where.

3. Declare to us, bright Star, if we shall  
seek.

Him in the Morning's blushing cheek,  
Or search the beds of Spices through,  
To find him out?

*Star.* No, this ye need not do;  
But only come, and see Him rest  
A Princely Babe in's Mother's Brest.

*Chor.* He's seen, he's seen, why then a Round,  
Let's kisse the sweet and holy ground;  
And all rejoyce, that we have found  
*A King, before conception crown'd.*



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

4. Come then, come then, and let us bring  
Unto our prettie Twelfth-Tide King,  
Each one his severall offering;

*Chor.* And when night comes, wee'l give Him  
wassailing;  
And that His treblé Honours may be seen,  
Wee'l chuse Him King, and make His  
Mother Queen.

*Chor.* What sweeter musick can we bring,  
Than a Caroll, for to sing  
The Birth of this our heavenly King?  
Awake the Voice! awake the String!  
Heart, eare, and Eye, and every thing  
Awake! the while the active Finger  
Runs division with the Singer.

*From the Flourish they came to the Song.*

1. Dark and dull night, flie hence away,  
And give the honour to this Day,  
That sees December turn'd to May.
2. If we may ask the reason, say;  
The why, and wherefore all things here  
Seem like the Spring-time of the yeere?
3. Why do's the chilling Winter's morne  
Smile, like a field beset with corne?  
Or smell, like to a Meade new-shorne,  
Thus, on the sudden? 4. Come and see

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The cause, why things thus fragrant be:  
'Tis He is borne, whose quick'ning Birth  
Gives life and luster, publike mirth,  
To Heaven, and the under-Earth.

*Chor.* We see Him come, and know Him ours,  
Who, with His Sun-shine, and His showers,  
Turnes all the patient ground to flowers.

1. The Darling of the world is come,  
And fit it is we finde a roome  
To welcome Him. 2. The nobler part  
Of all the house here, is the heart,

*Chor.* Which we will give Him; and bequeath  
This Hollie, and this Ivie Wreath,  
To do Him honour; who's our King,  
And Lord of all this Revelling.

ROBERT HERRICK



# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

## THE NATIVITY

### INTROITUS

#### PRAECO

Come, good people, all and each,  
Come and listen to our speech!  
In your presence here I stand,  
With a trumpet in my hand,  
To announce the Easter Play,  
Which we represent to-day!  
First of all we shall rehearse,  
In our action and our verse,  
The Nativity of our Lord,  
As written in the old record  
Of the Protevangelion,  
So that he who reads may run!  
[*Blows his trumpet.*]

### I. HEAVEN

MERCY [*at the feet of God*]  
Have pity, Lord! be not afraid  
To save mankind, whom thou hast made,  
Nor let the souls that were betrayed  
Perish eternally!

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

## JUSTICE

It cannot be, it must not be!  
When in the garden placed by thee,  
The fruit of the forbidden tree  
    He ate, and he must die!

## MERCY

Have pity, Lord! let penitence  
Atone for disobedience,  
Nor let the fruit of man's offence  
    Be endless misery!

## JUSTICE

What penitence proportionate  
Can e'er be felt for sin so great?  
Of the forbidden fruit he ate,  
    And damned must he be!

## GOD

He shall be saved, if that within  
The bounds of earth one free from sin  
Be found, who for his kith and kin  
    Will suffer martyrdom.

## THE FOUR VIRTUES

Lord! we have searched the world around,  
From centre to the utmost bound,  
But no such mortal can be found;  
    Despairing, back we come.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## WISDOM

No mortal, but a God made man,  
Can ever carry out this plan,  
Achieving what none other can,  
Salvation unto all!

## GOD

Go, then, O my beloved Son!  
It can by thee alone be done;  
By thee the victory shall be won  
O'er Satan and the Fall!

*[Here the Angel GABRIEL shall leave Paradise and fly towards the earth; the jaws of Hell open below, and the Devils walk about, making a great noise.]*

---

## II. MARY AT THE WELL

### MARY

Along the garden walk, and thence  
Through the wicket in the garden fence,  
My pitcher at the well to fill,  
I steal with quiet pace,  
That lies so deep and cool and still  
In this sequestered place.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

These sycamores keep guard around;  
I see no face, I hear no sound,  
Save bubblings of the spring,  
And my companions, who within  
The threads of gold and scarlet spin,  
And at their labor sing.

## THE ANGEL GABRIEL

Hail, Virgin Mary, full of grace!

[*Here MARY looketh around, trembling, and then saith*]:

## MARY

Who is it speaketh in this place,  
With such a gentle voice?

## GABRIEL

The Lord of heaven is with thee now!  
Blessed among all women thou,  
Who art his holy choice!

MARY [*setting down the pitcher*]  
What can this mean? No one is near,  
And yet, such sacred words I hear,  
I almost fear to stay.

[*Here the ANGEL, appearing to her shall say*]:

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## GABRIEL

Fear not, O Mary! but believe!  
For thou, a Virgin, shalt conceive  
A child this very day.

Fear not, O Mary! from the sky  
The majesty of the Most High  
Shall overshadow thee!

## MARY

Behold the handmaid of the Lord!  
According to thy holy word,  
So be it unto me!

*[Here the Devils shall again make a great noise,  
under the stage.]*

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## III. THE ANGELS OF THE SEVEN PLANETS, BEARING THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

### THE ANGELS

The Angels of the Planets Seven,  
Across the shining fields of heaven  
The natal star we bring!



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Dropping our sevenfold virtues down,  
As priceless jewels in the crown  
Of Christ, our new-born King.

### RAPHAEL

I am the Angel of the Sun,  
Whose flaming wheels began to run  
When God's almighty breath  
Said to the darkness and the Night,  
Let there be light! and there was light!  
I bring the gift of Faith.

### GABRIEL

I am the Angel of the Moon,  
Darkened, to be rekindled soon  
Beneath the azure cope!  
Nearest to earth, it is my ray  
That best illumines the midnight way.  
I bring the gift of Hope!

### ANAEL

The Angel of the Star of Love,  
The Evening Star, that shines above  
The place where lovers be,  
Above all happy hearths and homes,  
On roofs of thatch, or golden domes,  
I give him Charity!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## ZOBIACHEL

The Planet Jupiter is mine!  
The mightiest star of all that shine,  
    Except the sun alone!  
He is the High Priest of the Dove,  
And sends, from his great throne above,  
    Justice, that shall atone!

## MICHAEL

The Planet Mercury, whose place  
Is nearest to the sun in space,  
    Is my allotted sphere!  
And with celestial ardor swift  
I bear upon my hands the gift  
    Of heavenly Prudence here!

## URIEL

I am the Minister of Mars,  
The strongest star among the stars!  
    My songs of power prelude  
The march and battle of man's life,  
And for the suffering and the strife,  
    I give him Fortitude!

## ANACHIEL

The Angel of the uttermost  
Of all the shining, heavenly host,  
    From the far-off expanse

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Of the Saturnian, endless space  
I bring the last, the crowning grace,  
The gift of Temperance!

*[A sudden light shines from the windows of  
the stable in the village below.]*

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## IV. THE WISE MEN OF THE EAST

*[The stable of the Inn. The VIRGIN and  
CHILD. Three Gypsy Kings, GASPAR, MELCHIOR,  
and BELSHAZZAR, shall come in.]*

GASPAR

Hail to thee, Jesus of Nazareth!  
Though in a manger thou drawest thy breath,  
Thou art greater than Life and Death,  
Greater than Joy or Woe!  
This cross upon the line of life  
Portendeth struggle, toil, and strife,  
And through a region with dangers rife  
In darkness shalt thou go!

MELCHIOR

Hail to thee, King of Jerusalem!  
Though humbly born in Bethlehem,  
A sceptre and a diadem

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Await thy brow and hand!  
The sceptre is a simple reed,  
The crown will make thy temples bleed,  
And in thy hour of greatest need,  
Abashed thy subjects stand!

### BELSHAZZAR

Hail to thee, Christ of Christendom!  
O'er all the earth thy kingdom come!  
From distant Trebizond to Rome  
Thy name shall men adore!  
Peace and good-will among all men,  
The Virgin has returned again,  
Returned the old Saturnian reign  
And Golden Age once more.

### THE CHILD CHRIST

Jesus, the Son of God, am I,  
Born here to suffer and to die  
According to the prophecy,  
That other men may live!

### THE VIRGIN

And now these clothes, that wrapped him, take  
And keep them precious, for his sake;  
Our benediction thus we make,  
Naught else have we to give.

*[She gives them swaddling-clothes, and they depart.]*

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

V. THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

*[Here shall JOSEPH come in, leading an ass, on which are seated MARY and the CHILD.]*

MARY

Here will we rest us, under these  
O'erhanging branches of the trees,  
Where robins chant their Litanies,  
And canticles of joy.

JOSEPH

My saddle-girths have given way  
With trudging through the heat to-day;  
To you I think it is but play  
To ride and hold the boy.

MARY

Hark! how the robins shout and sing,  
As if to hail their infant King!  
I will alight at yonder spring  
To wash his little coat.

JOSEPH

And I will hobble well the ass,  
Lest, being loose upon the grass,  
He should escape; for, by the mass,  
He is nimble as a goat.

*[Here MARY shall alight and go to the spring.]*

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

MARY

O Joseph! I am much afraid,  
For men are sleeping in the shade;  
I fear that we shall be waylaid,  
And robbed and beaten sore!

*[Here a band of robbers shall be seen sleeping,  
two of whom shall rise and come forward.]*

DUMACHUS

Cock's soul! deliver up your gold!

JOSEPH

I pray you, Sirs, let go your hold!  
Of wealth I have no store.

DUMACHUS

Give up your money!

TITUS

Prithee cease!  
Let these good people go in peace!

DUMACHUS

First let them pay for their release,  
And then go on their way.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

TITUS

These forty groats I give in fee,  
If thou wilt only silent be.

MARY

May God be merciful to thee  
Upon the Judgment Day!

JESUS

When thirty years shall have gone by,  
I at Jerusalem shall die,  
By Jewish hands exalted high  
On the accursèd tree.

These thieves shall both be crucified,  
And Titus thenceforth shall abide  
In paradise with me.

*[Here a great rumor of trumpets and horses,  
like the noise of a king with his army, and the rob-  
bers shall take flight.]*

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW





*AUTO DE LOS REYES MAGOS*

ESCENA I

(CASPAR, SOLO)

Dios criador, qual marauila  
 no se qual es achesta strela!  
 Agora primas la e ueida,  
 poco timpo a que es nacida.  
 Nacido es el Criador  
 que es de la gentes senior?  
 Non es uerdad non se que digo,  
 todo esto non uale uno figo;  
 otra nocte me lo catare,  
 si es uertad, bine lo sabre. (*pausa*)  
 Bine es uertad lo que io digo?  
 en todo, en todo lo prohio.  
 Non pudet seer otra sennal?  
 Achesto es i non es al;  
 nacido es Dios, por uer, de fembra  
 in achest mes de december.  
 Ala ire o que fure, aoralo e,  
 por Dios de todos lo terne.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(BALTASAR, SOLO)

Esta strela non se dond uinet,  
quin la trae o quin la tine.  
Porque es achesta sennal?  
en mos dias on ui atal.  
Certas nacido es en tirra  
aquel qui en pace i en guera  
senior a a seer da oriente  
de todos hata in occidente.  
Por tres noches me lo uere  
i mas de uero lo sabre. (*pausa*)  
En todo, en todo es nacido?  
non se si algo e ueido.  
ire, lo aorare,  
i pregare i rogare.

(MELCHIOR, SOLO)

Ual, Criador, atal facinda  
fu nunquas alguandre falada  
o en escriptura trubada?  
Tal estrela non es in celo,  
desto so io bono strelero;  
bine lo ueo sines escarno  
que uno omme es nacido de carne,  
que es senior de todo el mundo,  
asi cumo el cilo es redondo;  
de todas gentes senior sera  
i todo seglo iugara.  
Es? non es?

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

cudo que uerdade es.

Ueer lo e otra uegada,  
si es uertad o si es nada. (*pausa*)

Nacido es el Criador  
de todas las gentes maior;  
bine lo [u]eo que es uerdade,  
ire ala, par caridad.

### ESCENA II

(CASPAR Á BALTASAR)

Dios uos salue, senior; sodes uos strelero?  
dezidme la uertad, de uos sabelo quiro  
[Vedes tal marauila?]  
[nacida] es una strela.

(BALTASAR)

Nacido es el Criador,  
que de las gentes es senior.  
Ire, lo aorare.

(CASPAR)

Io otrosi rogar lo e.

(MELCHIOR Á LOS OTROS DOS)

Seniores, a qual tirra, o que [redes] andar?  
queredes ir conmigo al Criador rogar?  
Auedes lo ueido? io lo uo [aor]ar.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(CASPAR)

Nos imos otrosi, sil podremos falar.  
Andemos tras el strela, ueremos el logar.

(MELCHIOR)

Cumo podremos prouar si es homne mortal.  
o si es rei de terra o si celestial?

(BALTASAR)

Queredes bine saber cumo lo sabremos?  
oro, mira i acenso a el ofrecremos:  
si fure rei de terra, el oro quera;  
si fure omne mortal, la mira tomara;  
si rei celestial, estos dos dexara,  
tomara el encenso quel pertenecera.

(CASPAR Y MELCHIOR)

Andemos i asi lo fagamos.

## ESCENA III

(CASPAR Y LOS OTROS DOS REYES Á HERODES)

Salue te el Criador, Dios te curie de mal,  
un poco te dizeremos, non te queremos al,  
Dios te de longa uita i te curie de mal;  
imos in romeria aquel rei adorar  
que es nacido in tierra, nol podemos fallar.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(HERODES)

Que decides, o ides? a quin ides buscar?  
de qual terra uenides, o queredes andar?  
Decid me uostros nombres, no m' los querades  
celar.

(CASPAR)

A mi dizen Caspar,  
est otro Melchior, ad achest Baltasar.  
Rei, un rei es nacido que es senior de tirra,  
que mandara el seclo en grant pace sines gera.

(HERODES)

Es asi por uertad?

(CASPAR)

Si, rei, por caridad.

(HERODES)

I cumo lo sabedes?  
ia prouado lo auedes?

(CASPAR)

Rei, uertad te dizremos,  
que prouado lo auemos.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(MELCHIOR)

Esto es grand ma[ra]uila.  
un strela es nacida.

(BALTASAR)

Sennal face que es nacido  
i in carne humana uenido.

(HERODES)

Quanto i a que la uistes  
i que la percibistis?

(CASPAR)

Tredze dias a,  
i mais non auera,  
que la auemos ueida  
i bine percebida.

(HERODES)

Pus andad i buscad,  
i a el adorad,  
i por aqui tornad.  
Io ala ire,  
i adoralo e.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## ESCENA IV

(HERODES, SOLO)

¿Quin uio numpuas tal mal,  
Sobre rei otro tal!  
Aun non so io morto,  
ni so la terra pusto!  
rei otro sobre mi?  
numquas atal non ui!  
El siglo ua a caga,  
ia non se que me faga;  
por uertad no lo creo  
ata que io lo ueo.  
Uenga mio maiordo[ma]  
qui mios aueres toma. (*Sale el mayordomo*)  
Idme por mios abades,  
I por mis podestades,  
i por mios scriuanos,  
i por meos gramatgos,  
i por mios streleros,  
i por mios retóricos;  
o si lo saben ellos, o si lo an sabido.  
dezir m' an la uertad, si iace in escripto,

## ESCENA V

(SALEN LOS SABIOS DE LA CORTE)

Rei, que te plaze? he nos uenidos.

(HERODES)

I traedes uostros escriptos?



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(LOS SABIOS)

Rei, si traemos,  
los meiores que nos auemos.

(HERODES)

Pus catad,  
dezid me la uertad,  
si es aquel omne nacido  
que esto tres rees m' an dicho.  
Di, rabi, la uertad, si tu lo as sabido.

(EL RABÍ)

Po[r] ueras uo lo digo  
que no lo [fallo] escripto.

(OTRO RABÍ AL PRIMERO)

Hamihala, cumo eres enartado!  
por que eres rabi clamado?  
Non entendes las profecias,  
las que nos dixo Ieremias.  
Par mi lei, nos somos erados!  
por que non somos accordados?  
por que non dezimos uertad?

(RABÍ PRIMERO)

Io non la se, par caridad.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(RABÍ SEGUNDO)

Por que no la auemos usada,  
ni en nostras uocas es falada.

(From the edition of R. Menéndez Pidal in the  
"Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos,"  
Madrid, 1900)



*THE SALUTATION AND CONCEPTION*

*(Acted at N. towne)*

*(On the upper stage GOD, his SON, the  
HOLY SPIRIT, GABRIEL, and others; on  
the lower stage MARY.)*

PATER. From vs, God, aungel Gabryel, thou  
xalt be sende

In to the countre of Galyle  
(The name of the cyte Nazareth is kende)  
To a mayd. W(e) ddyd to a man is she,  
Of whom the name is Joseph, se,  
Of the hous of Davyd bore;  
The name of the mayd ffre  
Is Mary, that xal al restore.

FILIUS. Say that she is with-owte wo, and ful of  
grace;

And that I, the Son of the Godhed, of here  
xal be bore.

Hyghe the thou were there a pace,  
Ellys we xal be there the be-ffore,  
I haue so grett hast to be man thore  
In that mekest and purest virgyne.

Sey here, she xal restore  
Of yow aungellys the grett ruyne.

SPIRITUS SANCTUS. And if she aske the how it  
myth be,

Telle here, I, the Holy Gost, xal werke al this;

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Sche xal be savyd thorwe oure vnyte.

In tokyn, here bareyn cosyn Elyzabeth is

Qwyk with childe in here grett age, i-wys.

Sey here, to vs is no thyng impossible.

Here body xal be so ful-fylt with blys

That she xal sone thynke this sonde credyble.

GABRIEL. In thyn hey inbassett, Lord, I xal go;

It xal be do with a thought.

Be-holde now, Lord, I go here to,

I take my fflyth, and byde nowth.

(GABRYEL *descends, and approaches*  
MARY.)

*Ave, Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum!*

Heyl, fful of grace! God is with the!

Amonge alle women blyssyd art thou.

Here this name "Eva" is turnyd "Aue";

That is to say, with-owte sorwe art ye now.

Thow sorwe in yow hath no place,

Yett of joy, lady, ye nede more;

Therefore I adde and sey "fful of grace,"

For so ful of grace was nevyr non bore.

Yet who hath grace, he nedyth kepyng sore;

Therefore I sey "God is with the,"

Whiche xal kepe yow endlesly thore.

So amonge alle women blyssyd art ye!

MARIA. A! mercy, God! this is a mervelyous  
herynge!

In the aungelys wordys I am trobelyd her;

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

I thynk, "How may be this gretynge?"

Aungelys dayly to me doth aper,  
But not in the lyknes of man; that is my fer.  
And also thus hyghly to comendyd be,  
I am most vn-wuthry. I can-not answere.  
Grett shamfastnes and grett dred is in me.

GABRYEL. Mary, in this take ye no drede,  
For at God grace fflownde haue ye.  
Ye xal conceyve in your wombe, in dede,  
A childe, the sone of the Trynyte.  
His name of yow Jhesu clepyd xal be;  
He xal be gett, the son of the hyest clepyd of  
kende;  
And of his ffadyr, Davyd, the Lord xal geve  
hym the se,  
Reynyng in the hous of Jacob, of whiche regne  
xal be no ende.

MARIA. Aungel, I sey to yow,  
In what manere of wyse xal this be?  
For knowyng of man I haue non now;  
I haue eyr more kept, and xal, my virginyte.  
I dowte not the wordys ye han seyde to me,  
But I aske how it xal be do.

GABRYEL. The Holy Gost xal come fro a-bove  
to the,  
And the vertu of hym Hyest xal schadu the so;  
Therfore that Holy Gost of the xal be bore;  
He xal be clepyd the Son of God sage.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And se, Elyzabeth, your cosyn thore,  
She hath conseyyd a son in hyre age;  
This is the sexte monyth of here passage,  
Of here that clepyd was bareyn.  
No thyng is impossyble to Goddys vsage.  
They thunkyth longe to here what ye wyl seyn.

*Here the aungel makyth a lytyl restynge, and  
MARY be-holdyth hym; and the aungel  
seythe:*

Mary, com of, and haste the,  
And take hede in thyn entent  
How the Holy Gost,—blyssyd he be!—  
A-bydyth thin answere and thin assent.  
Thorwe wyse werke of dyvinyte  
The Secunde Persone, verament,  
Is mad man by frateryste  
With-inne thi self, in place present.

Ferther more, take hede this space  
How alle the blyssyd spyrytys of vertu  
That are in hefne by-ffore Goddys face,  
And alle the gode levers and trew  
That are here in this erthely place,  
Thyn owyn kynrede, the sothe ho knew,  
And the chosyn sowlis this tyme of grace  
That are in helle and byde (ther) rescu,—

As Adam, Abraham and Davyd, in fere,  
And many othere of good reputacion,—

· C O M E C H R I S T M A S

That thin answere desyre to here  
And thin assent to the incarnacion,  
In whiche thou standyst as preserver,  
Of alle man-kende savacion.  
Gyff me myn answere now, lady dere,  
To alle these creaturys comfortacion.

MARIA. With alle mekenes I clyne to this  
a-corde,  
Bowynge downe my face with alle benyngnyte.  
Se here the hand-mayden of oure Lorde.  
Aftyr thi worde be it don to me.

GABRYEL. Gramercy, my lady ffre;  
Gramercy of your answere on hyght;  
Gramercy of your grett humylyte;  
Gramercy, ye lanterne off lyght!

*Here the Holy Gost descendit with iij  
bemys to Our Lady; the Sone of the  
Godhed next with iij bemys to the Holy  
Gost; the Fadgy Godly with iij bemys to  
the Sone: and so entre alle thre to here  
bosom; and Mary seyth:*

MARIA: A! now I ffele in my body be  
Parfyte God and parfyte man,  
Havyng al schappe of chyldly carnalyte.  
Evyn al at onys, thus God be-gan;

Nott takynge ffyrst o membyr and sythe a-nother,  
But parfyte childhod ye haue a-non.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Of your hand-mayden now ye haue mad your  
modyr,

With-owte peyne, in fflesche and bon.

Thus conceyved nevyr woman non  
That evyr was beynge in this lyff.

O, myn hyst Fadyr, in your trone,  
It is worthy your Son—now my son—haue a  
prerogatyff!

I can not telle what yoy, what blysse,

Now I fele in my body!

Aungel Gabryel, I thank yow for thys.

Most mekely recomende me to my Faderys  
mercy.

To haue be the modyr of God fful lytyl wend I.

Now myn cosyn Elyzabeth ffayn wold I se,

How sche hath conseyyvid as ye dede specyfy.

Now blyssd be the hygh Trynyte!

GABRYEL. Fare weyl, turtyl, Goddys dowtere  
dere!

Fare wel, Goddys modyr! I the honowre!

Fare wel, Goddys systyr and his pleynge fere!

Fare wel, Goddys chawmere and his bowre!

MARIA. Fare wel, Gabryel, specyalye!

Fare wel, Goddys masangere expresse!

I thank yow for your traveyl hye;

Gramercy of your grett goodnes,

And namely of your comfortabyl massage.

For I vndyrstande, by inspyracion,



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

That ye knowe by syngulere preuylage  
Most of my sonys Incarnacion.

I pray yow take it in to vsage,  
Be a custom ocupacion,  
To vesitye me ofte be mene passage;  
Your presence is my comfortacion.

GABRYEL. At your wyl, lady, so xal it be.  
Ye gentyllest of blood and hiest of kynrede  
That reynyth in earth in ony degre,  
Be pryncypal incheson of the Godhede,

I comende me on to yow, thou trone of the  
Trinyte.

O mekest myde, now the modyr of Jhesu!  
Qwen of Hefne, Lady of Erth, and Empres of  
Helle be ye;  
Socour to alle synful that wole to yow sew;  
Thour your body beryth the babe oure blysse xal  
renew.

To yow, modyr of mercy, most mekely I reco-  
mende.

And, as I began, I ende, with an "Ave!" new,  
Enjonyd hefne and erth. With that I ascende.

(*Exit.*)

*Angels singing this hymn:*

*Ave, Maria, gratia plena!*

*Dominus tecum, uirgo serena!*

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S



## *DIALOGUE*

MAN

Sweetest Saviour, if my soul  
Were but worth the having,  
Quickly should I then controll  
Any thought of waving.  
But when all my cares and pains  
Cannot give the name of gains  
To Thy wretch so full of stains,  
What delight or hope remains?

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## SAVIOUR

What, childe, is the ballance thine,  
Thine the poise and measure?  
If I say, 'Thou shalt be Mine,'  
Finger not My treasure.  
What the gains in having thee  
Do amount to, onely He  
Who for man was sold can see,  
That transferr'd th' accounts to Me.

## MAN

But as I can see no merit  
Leading to this favour,  
So the way to fit me for it  
Is beyond my savour.  
As the reason, then, is Thine,  
So the way is none of mine,  
I disclaim the whole designe:  
Sinne disclaims and I resigne.

## SAVIOUR

That is all:—if that I could  
Get without repining—  
And My clay, My creature, would  
Follow my resigning;  
That as I did freely part  
With My glorie and desert,  
Left all joyes to feel all smart—

COM E C H R I S T M A S  
MAN

Ah, no more: Thou break'st my heart.

GEORGE HERBERT



*IN THE HOLY NATIVITY OF OUR  
LORD GOD*

A HYMN SUNG AS BY THE SHEPHERDS

THE HYMN

CHORUS

Come, we shepherds, whose blest sight  
Hath met Love's noon in Nature's night;  
Come, lift we up our loftier song,  
And wake the sun that lies too long.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

To all our world of well-stolen joy  
He slept; and dreamt of no such thing  
While we found out Heaven's fairer eye,  
And kissed the cradle of our King.  
Tell him he rises now, too late  
To show us aught worth looking at.

Tell him we now can show him more  
Than he e'er show'd to mortal sight;  
Than he himself e'er saw before,  
Which to be seen needs not his light.  
Tell him, Tityrus, where th' hast been,  
Tell him, Thyrsis, what th' hast seen.

### TITYRUS

Gloomy night embraced the place  
Where the noble Infant lay.  
The Babe looked up and showed His face;  
In spite of darkness, it was day.  
It was Thy day, Sweet! and did rise,  
Not from the East, but from Thine eyes.

### THYRSIS

Winter chid aloud, and sent  
The angry North to wage his wars.  
The North forgot his fierce intent,  
And left perfumes instead of scars.  
By those sweet eyes' persuasive powers,  
Where he meant frost, he scattered flowers.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## BOTH

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Young dawn of our eternal Day!

We saw Thine eyes break from their East,  
And chase the trembling shades away.

We saw Thee; and we blest the sight,  
We saw Thee by Thine Own sweet light.

## TITYRUS

Poor world, said I, what wilt thou do  
To entertain this starry Stranger,  
Is this the best thou canst bestow?  
A cold, and not too cleanly, manger?  
Contend, the powers of Heaven and Earth,  
To fit a bed for this huge birth?

## THYRSIS

Proud world, said I, cease your contest,  
And let the mighty Babe alone.  
The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest,  
Love's architecture is his own.  
The Babe whose birth embraves this morn,  
Made His Own bed ere He was born.

## TITYRUS

I saw the curled drops, soft and slow,  
Come hovering o'er the place's head;  
Offering their whitest sheets of snow

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

To furnish the fair Infant's bed;  
Forbear, said I; be not too bold,  
Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

THYRSIS

I saw the obsequious Seraphims  
Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,  
For well they now can spare their wing,  
Since Heaven itself lies here below.  
Well done, said I; but are you sure  
Your down so warm, will pass for pure?

TITYRUS

No, no! your King's not yet to seek  
Where to repose His royal head;  
See, see, how soon His new-bloom'd cheek  
'Twixt's mother's breasts is gone to bed.  
Sweet choice, said we! no way but so  
Not to lie cold, yet deep in snow.

BOTH

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Bright dawn of our eternal Day!  
We saw Thine eyes break from their East,  
And chase the trembling shades away.  
We saw Thee: and we blest the sight,  
We saw Thee by Thine Own sweet light.

FULL CHORUS

Welcome, all wonders in one sight!  
Eternity shut in a span!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Summer in Winter, Day in Night!  
Heaven in earth, and God in man!  
Great, little One! whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts Earth to Heaven, stoops Heaven to Earth.  
Welcome, though not to gold nor silk,  
To more than Cæsar's birthright is;  
Two sister-seas of virgin-milk,  
With many a rarely temper'd kiss,  
That breathes at once both maid and mother,  
Warms in the one, cools in the other.  
(She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips  
Her kisses in Thy weeping eye;  
She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips,  
That in their buds yet blushing lie:  
She 'gainst those mother-diamonds, tries  
The points of her young eagle's eyes.)

Welcome, though not to those gay flies,  
Gilded i' th' beams of earthly kings;  
Slippery souls in smiling eyes:  
But to poor shepherds, home-spun things;  
Whose wealth's their flock; whose wit, to be  
Well-read in their simplicity.  
Yet when young April's husband-showers  
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,  
We'll bring the first-born of her flowers  
To kiss Thy feet, and crown Thy head.  
To Thee, dread Lamb! Whose love must  
keep  
The Shepherds, more than they their sheep.



C O M E    C H R I S T M A S

To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King  
Of simple Graces and sweet Loves:  
Each of us his lamb will bring,  
Each his pair of silver doves:  
Till burnt at last in fire of Thy fair eyes,  
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.  
RICHARD CRASHAW

*SONG OF THE CRIB*  
(ab. 1500)

Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,  
Help me cradle the child divine;  
God reward thee and all that's thine  
In Paradise,  
So prays the mother Mary.

Gladly, dear one, lady mine,  
Help I cradle this child of thine;  
God's own light on us both shall shine  
In Paradise  
As prays the mother Mary.

CHORUS

He came among us at Christmastide,  
At Christmas tide,  
In Bethlehem;  
Men shall bring him from far and wide  
Love's diadem:  
Jesus, Jesus,  
Lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us!  
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# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## SERVANT I

Peace to all that have goodwill!  
God, who heaven and earth doth fill,  
Comes to turn us away from ill,  
And lies so still  
Within the crib of Mary.

## SERVANT II

All shall come and bow the knee;  
Wise and happy their souls shall be,  
Loving such a divinity,  
As all may see  
In Jesus, Son of Mary.

## SERVANT III

Now is born Emanuel,  
Prophesied once by Ezekiel,  
Promised Mary by Gabriel—  
Ah, who can tell  
Thy praises, Son of Mary!

## SERVANT IV

Thou my lazy heart hath stirred,  
Thou, the Father's eternal Word,  
Greater than aught that ear hath heard,  
Thou tiny bird  
Of love, thou Son of Mary.

## SERVANT I

Sweet and lovely little one,  
Thou princely, beautiful, God's own Son,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Without thee all of us were undone;  
Our love is won  
By thine, O Son of Mary.

## SERVANT II

Little man, and God indeed,  
Little and poor, thou art all we need;  
We will follow where thou dost lead,  
And we will heed  
Our brother, born of Mary.

*Trans. from the German*



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*IN THE TOWN*

JOSEPH:

Take heart, the journey's ended:  
I see the twinkling lights,  
Where we shall be befriended  
On this the night of nights.

MARY:

Now praise the Lord that led us  
So safe unto the town,  
Where men will feed and bed us,  
And I can lay me down.

JOSEPH:

And how then shall we praise him?  
Alas my heart is sore  
That we no gifts can raise him  
Who are so very poor.

MARY:

We have as much as any  
That on the earth do live,  
Although we have no penny  
We have ourselves to give.

JOSEPH:

Look yonder, wife, look yonder!  
An hostelry I see,

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Where travelers that wander  
Will very welcome be.

MARY:

The house is tall and stately,  
The door stands open thus;  
Yet, husband, I fear greatly  
That inn is not for us.

JOSEPH:

God save you, gentle master!  
Your littlest room indeed  
With plainest walls of plaster  
Tonight will serve our need.

HOST:

For lordlings and for ladies  
I've lodging and to spare;  
For you and yonder maid is  
No closet anvwhere.

JOSEPH:

Take heart, take heart, sweet Mary,  
Another inn I spy,  
Whose host will not be chary  
To let us easy lie.

MARY:

Oh aid me, I am ailing,  
My strength is nearly gone;

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

I feel my limbs are failing,  
And yet we must go on.

JOSEPH:

God save you, Hostess, kindly!  
I pray you, house my wife,  
Who bears beside me blindly  
The burden of her life.

HOSTESS:

My guests are rich men's daughters  
And sons, I'd have you know!  
Seek out the poorer quarters  
Where ragged people go.

JOSEPH:

Good sir, my wife's in labour,  
Some corner let us keep.

HOST:

Not I: knock up my neighbour,  
And as for me, I'll sleep.

MARY:

In all the lighted city  
Where rich men welcome win,  
Will not one house for pity  
Take two poor strangers in?

JOSEPH:

Good woman, I implore you  
Afford my wife a bed.

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

HOSTESS:

Nay, nay, I've nothing for you  
Except the cattle-shed.

MARY:

Then gladly in the manger  
Our bodies we will house,  
Since men tonight are stranger  
Than asses are and cows.

JOSEPH:

Take heart, take heart, sweet Mary,  
The cattle are our friends:  
Lie down, lie down, sweet Mary,  
For here the journey ends.

MARY:

Now praise the Lord that found me  
This shelter in the town,  
Where I with friends around me  
May lay my burden down.

Paraphrased from 15th Cent. French Carol  
by ELEANOR FARJEON

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*XI. THE SALUTATION AND CON-  
CEPTION*

*(Coventry Plays)*

CONTEMPLACIO. Ffowre thowsand sex undryd  
foure telle,

Man ffor his offens and ffowle foly,  
Hath leyn yeres in the peynes of helle,  
And were wurthy to ly therin endlesly,  
But thanne xulde perysche your grete mercye.

Good Lord, have on man pyté,  
Have mende of the prayour seyde by Ysaie,  
Lete mercy meke thin hiest magesté.

Wolde God thou woldyst breke thin hefne  
myghtye,

And com down here into erthe,  
And levyn yeres thre and threttye,  
Thyn famyt ffolke with thi fode to fede.  
To staunche thi thryste lete thi syde blede,  
Ffor erst wole not be mad redempcion.

Cum vesite us in this tyme of nede,  
Of thi careful creatures, Lord, have com-  
passyon!

A! woo to us wrecchis that wrecchis be,  
Ffor God hath addyd ssorwe to sorwe;  
I prey the, Lorde, thi sowles com se,  
How thei ly and sobbe, both eve and morewe,



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

With thi blyssyd blood ffrom balys hem borwe,  
 Thy careful creaturys cryenge in captyvyté,  
 A! tary not, gracyous Lord, tyl it be to-morwe,  
 The devyl hath dysceyved hem be his iniquité.

A! quod Jeremye, who xal gyff wellys to myn  
 eynes,

That I may wepe bothe day and nyght,  
 To se oure bretheryn in so longe peynes?

Here myschevys amende may thi meche myght!  
 As grett as the se, Lord, was Adamys contrysyon  
 ryght.

Ffrom oure hed is ffalle the crowne,  
 Man is comeryd in synne, I crye to thi syght,  
 Gracyous Lord! Gracyous Lord! Gracyous  
 Lord, come downe!

VIRTUTES. Lord! plesyth it thin high domyna-  
 cion,

On man that thou made to have pyte,  
 Patryarchys and prophetys han mad supplicacion,

Oure offyse is to presente here prayeres to the.  
 Aungelys, archungelys, we thre

That ben in the fyrst ierarchie,  
 Fffror man to thin hy magesté,

Mercy! mercy! mercy! we crye.  
 The aungel, Lord, thou made so glorious,

Whos synne hath mad hym a devyl in helle,  
 He mevyd man to be so contraryous,

Man repentyd, and he in his obstynacye doth  
 dwelle.

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Hese grete males, good Lord, repelle,  
 And take man onto thi grace,  
 Lete thi mercy make hym with aungelys dwelle,  
 Of Locyfere to restore the place.

PATER. *Propter miseriam inopum, et gemitum  
 pauperum nunc exurgam.*

Ffor the wretchydnes of the nedy,  
 And the porys lamentacion,  
 Now xal I ryse that am Almyghty,  
 Tyme is come of reconsyliacion,  
 My prophetys with prayers have made supplicacion,  
 My contryte creaturys crye alle for comferte,  
 Alle myn aungellys in hefne, withowte cessacion,  
 They crye that grace to man myght exorte.

VERITAS. Lord, I am thi dowtere, Trewthe,  
 Thou wilt se I be not lore,  
 Thyn unkynde creatures to save were rewthe,  
 The offens of man hath grevyd the sore.  
 Whan Adam had synnyd, thou seydest yore,  
 That he xulde deye and go to helle,  
 And now to blysse hym to restore,  
 Twey contraryes mow not togedyr dwelle.

Thy trewthe, Lord, xal leste withowtyn ende,  
 I may in no wyse ffro the go,  
 That wrecche that was to the so unkende,  
 He may not have to meche wo.  
 He dyspysyd the and plesyd thi ffo,  
 Thou art his creatour and he is thi creature,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thou hast lovdy trewth, it is seyde evyr mo,  
 Therefore in peynes lete hym evyrmore endure.

MISERCORDIA. O ffadyr of mercye and God of  
 comforte,  
 That counselle[st] us in eche trybulacion,  
 Lete your dowtere Mercy to yow resorte,  
 And on man that is myschevyd have compassyon.  
 Hym grevyth fful gretly his transgressyon,  
 Alle hefne and erthe crye ffor mercy;  
 Me semyth ther xul be non excepcion,  
 Ther prayers ben offeryd so specyally.

Threwthe sseyth she hath evyr be than,  
 I graunt it wel she hath be so,  
 And thou seyst endlesly that mercy thou hast kept  
 ffor man  
 Than mercyabyl lorde, kepe us bothe to,  
 Thu seyst *veritas mea et misericordia mea cum*  
*ipso*,  
 Suffyr not thi sowlis than in sorwe to slepe,  
 That helle hownde that hatyth the byddyth hym  
 ho!  
 Thi love, man, no lengere lete hym kepe.

JUSTICIA. Mercy, me merveylyth what yow  
 movyth,  
 Ye know wel I am your sister Ryghtwysnes,  
 God is ryghtfful and ryghtffulness lovdyth,  
 Man offendyd hym that is endles,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Therefore his endless punchement may nevyr sees;  
Also he forsoke his makere that made hym of  
clay,

And the devyl to his mayster he ches,  
Xulde he be savyd? nay! nay! nay!

As wyse as is God he wolde a be,  
This was the abhomynabyll presumpcion,  
It is seyde, ye know wel this of me,  
That the ryghtwysnes of God hath no diffy-  
nicion.

Therffore late this be oure conclusyon,  
He that sore synnyd ly styll in sorwe,  
He may nevyr make a seyth be resone,  
Whoo myght thanne thens hym borwe?

MISERICORDIA. Systere Ryghtwysnes, ye are to  
vengeabyll,

Endles synne God endles may restore,  
Above alle hese werkys God is mercyabyll,  
Thow he forsook God be synne, be feythe he  
forsook hym never the more.

And thow he presumyd nevyr so sore,  
Ye must consyder the frelnes of mankende,  
Lerne, and ye lyst, this is Goddys lore,  
The mercy of God is withowtyn ende.

PAX. To spare your speches, systeres, it syt;  
It is not onest in vertuys to ben dycencion,  
The pes of God ovyrcomyth alle wytt.  
Thow Trewthe and Ryght sey grett reson,  
Yett Mercy seyth best to my pleson;

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Ffor yf mannys sowle xulde abyde in helle,  
Between God and man evyr xulde be dyvysyon,  
And than myght not I Pes dwelle.

Therefore me semyth best ye thus acorde;  
Than hefne and erthe ye xul qweme,  
Putt bothe your sentens in oure Lorde,  
And in his hygh wysdam lete hym deme.  
This is most syttynge me xulde seme,  
And lete se how we fflowre may alle abyde,  
That mannys sowle it xulde perysche it wore  
sweme,  
Or that ony of us ffro othere xulde dyvyde.

VERITAS. In trowthe hereto I consente,  
I wole prey oure lorde it may so be.

JUSTICIA. I Ryghtwysnes am wele contente,  
Ffor in hym is very equityé.

MISERICORDIA. And I Mercy ffro this counsel  
wole not fle,  
Tyl wysdam hath seyde I xal ses.

PAX. Here is God now, here is unyté,  
Hefne and erthe is plesyd with Pes.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## I

### MYSTERE DE LA NATIVITE

C'EST LE JEUX DE LA NATIVITÉ JHESUCRIST ET  
COMENT LES III ROY LE VINRENT AOREIR.

En l'honneur de Dieu tout puissant  
et sa mere Marie, la royne des angele,  
unc jeux vos veulhe comenchire  
por resjoïr la bonne compaignie.  
Si *vus* prie, tresdouche suers, humblement,  
que unc pitit de silenche  
nos veulhies presteir iusque en la fin  
et vos veireis le jeux comenchire.

JOSEPH A MARIE

Heylas! noble dame!  
quelque chose vos fault, à mon semblant,  
car vos asteis mult belle et resplendissant.

MARIE A JOSEPH

Mon pere, l'heure est venue maintenant  
que ie doie enfanteir mon enfan.

JOSEPH

Noble dame, vos plaist il  
que je voise les sage feme querir  
ou aucune persone por vos acompaignier?

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

MARIE

Mon pere, *ainsi que* à la conception,  
nulle creature n'y fist chose de monde,  
pareillement ne fera à la natiuité;  
ne *vus* soucies ne desconforteis,  
car *mon pere* celeiste porueirat à tout.

ICHI ADORE MARIE JHesus

O sire, vos soïes le bien venu à monde,  
de ciel en terre por le salut des homme.  
O sire, *que* mult vos aucis esté desireiz  
des sains patriarche et prophete.  
Je vos adore comme mon createur,  
Dieu et homme et mon fils, de monde salueur.

ET PUIS BAISE LES PIES ET MAIN DE JHESUS

MARIE

O sire, *que* grant grasce fait m'aucis,  
de moy auoir esleut *vostre* mere.  
Mon Dieu et mon createur *vus* estes  
et mon chire fils tresameis.

JOSEPH EN PLORANT DE JOIE DIST A MARIE:  
Benoite sur toute femme, *permettez*  
*que* je puis adoreir  
le fils de Dieu et le *vostre* tant desirez.

MARIE

Mon pere, à *vostre* plaisir,  
le adoreis toute à loysir.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

ICHI ADORE JOSEPH:

O sire Dieu beny soies,  
quant tant de grasce fait m'auez  
de vos veoir de mes yeuls corporel  
et tant de roy et patriarche et de prophete  
vos ont de veoir tant desirez  
et point ne *vus* ont veyut à leur greit.  
Heylas! comment le poraie  
enver vos satisfaire?  
Je vos adore comme mon createur,  
mon Dieu et mon redempteur.

JOSEPH A MARIE

O noble damme bien auieree,  
regardeis vostre enfan bien ameïs,  
qui ne fait *que* gemire et ploier  
de fain, de froit et de poureté.  
Helas! chire damme, que fereis,  
quant point de lait *vus* n'aueis  
por doneir à vostre enfan?  
vos plaist il *que* je appelle *quelque* femme  
qui le venrat alaitire?

MARIE

Nennilh, voirement,  
car Dieu mon pere porueirat parfaitement.



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

YCHI PRIE MARIE A DIEU LE PERE.

O Dieu, mon pere, *vus* et moy auons  
unc seule fils en *commun*;  
portant vos, qui porueies  
à toute creature leur necessité,  
porueies à piti enfan, teillement  
qu'il puis estre sustentez *suffissamment*.

LE PREMIRE ANGELE AZ PASTORE

Treschire frere et amis,  
point de paour n'aïies;  
veiies, tres grant ioie je vos anunche,  
qui eirt à toute le monde,  
car aiourduy vos est neis le salueur,  
qui est Crist le signeur,  
et je vos donne chi signe *par* verité,  
car l'enfan vos trouuerés,  
nus en la creppe, de drappellet envolleppez.

LE II<sup>e</sup> ANGELE AZ PASTORE

Encore vos nonche grant paix et *grant* honeur;  
neis est le roy que de monde est salueur;  
en *Bethleem* aleiz toust se[n]s sourjour,  
si sareis le renom por vos mielz enformeir.

LE III<sup>e</sup> ANGELE

Aiourduy, le roy des ciel  
at daingnie naistre de la *Vierge* Marie,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

affin que l'homme et la femme perdus,  
fust rapellez à la joie celeste lassus.  
Or resjoiissons nos, les chors des *angele*,  
car le salut eterneil est apparuït az creature  
*humaine*.

Ceirtainement unc enfan nos est neiz,  
unc fils nos est donneiz  
et est appellez Dieu fors et puissans.  
Or allons et le aorons.

CHI S'EN VONT LES ANGELE TOUTE  
EN CHANTANT: GLORIA IN EXEL SIS.

CHI ADORENT LES ANGLE.

LE PREMIERE PASTORE

Treschire freires, aueis *vus* l'*angele* oyt,  
*qui* maintenant at nos cuer resjoiïet?  
Allons *jusque* en *Bethleem*,  
si sarons la chose ceirtaine,  
*qui* des *angele* dit nos ont esteit  
et che *que* nostre *signeur* nos at fait et mostreit.

LE II<sup>e</sup> PASTORE

Volentire et legirement *yaie*  
por cognoistre les *parole* *qui* sont dit des *angele*;  
*maïns* aueuc moy ma flaiot aporteraie,  
de la *queil* je moy *joweraie*,  
por consoler le pitit enfan,  
*qui* est Dieu et *signeur* de tout le monde.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## LE III<sup>e</sup> PASTEUR

Et *vous*, ma douche amye Eylison,  
il *vous* fault adorer cel enfanchon  
aweucque *vostre* compaigne Mahai,  
qui enporterat une angneax;  
et Troffeit, mon frere, *vous* mande  
que enporteis chaschune une lampe.

## EYLISON

Et a bien! tredoux frere!  
que Dieu *vous* met huy en bone heel!  
Vechy des nois et pumes en *nostre* panthier,  
qui *nous* demorat hier à soppeir  
*et se vous* auies ung seul flaiotteax,  
*vous* series ung tres gentils pasturiar.

## LE III<sup>e</sup> PASTEUR

Et de par Dieu j'en aie ung!

## [EYLISON A MAHAYL

Or sus, damme Mahay,  
prendeis ung aingneal gras;  
nos laisorons chi nos brebis,  
en la garde de l'enfant petis.

## MAHAY A ELYSON

Et abien! tresdouche compaigne!  
Allons y, nos deux ensemble;

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

nos laisserons trotteir douant  
les jollis pasteur de renon.  
Nos en yrons apres le pitit pas,  
festoïr et conjoïr la mere et l'enfant.]

QUANT LES PASTOREAZ SONT DEUANT NOSTRE  
DAMME:

## LE PREMIERE PASTORE

Sachies, noble damme,  
et vos, norisseur del enfan,  
que les angle de ciel  
nos ont anonchie,  
*qui* le vraie fils de Dieu  
soy est apparuit en char humaine!  
C'est le salueur de tout le monde  
et, *par* sa grande misericorde,  
nos en serons tous salueiz;  
et some chi venus por le adoreir.

CHY ADORENT LES PASTEURS *et* PUYs CHANTENT:  
GLORIEUX DIEU *qui* FIST.

## LE PEUPLE AZ PASTORE

Entre vos, pastore et bergier,  
nos vous prions *que* nos diseis,  
*que* il chose meruelleuse veyut aueis  
*par* coy si grant ioie demynés,  
et qui est cils qui soy est apparuit.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## LE III<sup>e</sup> PASTORE

Or escouteis, tresbone gens!  
Nos uos disons chose mult certaine:  
nos auons veyut le salueur de monde neis,  
gysant en la creppe, mult pitieusement ploreir;  
par sa grande misericorde, nos serons tousaluez.

## CHANTENT LES PASTEURS TOUT ENSEMBLE:

Entre nos, pasteurs et bergier,  
veyus auons cils enfanchon;  
de fain auoir, poure lysson;  
c'estoit por son humilité!

## JASPAR A MELCHIOR

O mon *signeur* roy, dont veneis  
et *queil* est *vostre* terre et contree?  
Qui vos at droit chi amyneis?  
Diseis le nos, sens demoree.

## MELCHIOR

Je suy au dit attendant,  
de l'escripture, qui dist auant  
de Jacob l'estoille nasteroit,  
des fils Israhel à nous sourdroit,  
qui tout les regne terriene  
aroit tresbien en ses main.  
Sachies *que* suy d'une cyté royal,  
qui est dit cyté de Tharse,  
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## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

et suy *par* droit noin appelleit  
Melchior bien renomeit.

### JASPAR A BALTHAZAR

Et vos, o mon *seigneur* roy,  
por coy veneis à si grant conroy?  
*Vostre* non et vostre terre  
moy poreis dire, s'il vos plaist?

### BALTHAZAR

Sachies, mes *seigneur*, que mon nom est Balthazar  
et suy roy coroneit de la cyté de Saba;  
si aie une estoille (estaille) veyut,  
qui en ciel soy est apparuit,  
laqueil moy at droit chi amyneit,  
por troueir le roy souerain,  
qui est neis nouvellement.

### MELCHIOR A JASPAR

O mon *seigneur*! s'il vos plaisoit,  
nos sariens volentire *vostre* noin,  
de queil terre et de queil region  
vos asteis et de queil nacion?

### JASPAR AZ II ROY

Mon noin, mess*seigneur*, volentire  
vos diraie, sens point mentire.  
J'aie noin Jaspar et suy d'Arabie,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

et plusseur jour me suy maris  
et sachies *que* n'aie aultre volenté  
*que* de aoreir le roy nouvellement neis.

### BALTHAZAR

O mes tres noble signeurs!  
puis que ensi est *que* le hault roy de magesté  
nos at tous III ychi assembleit  
por troueir le saueur de monde nouvellement nes,  
humblement vos priie *que*, à grant joie,  
y allons ensemble por ly aoreir.

ICHI MANDE HERODE SES CLEIRC ET FAIT BIEN  
LE COROCHIE.

### HERODE A SON MESSAGire

Hasteis vos, mon messagire,  
parleis à moy, sens dementire.

### LE MESSAGire

Que vos plaist, mon douls signeur?  
A vos doie loyalté et hounneur;  
dit moy ce qu'il vos plaist  
et je le feraie *sens* arest.

### HERODE A SON MESSAGire

Dit az clerc *qui* à moy parleir viengnent  
toust, sens nullement attendre;  
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## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

aucune question leur veulle faire  
*qui* est à moy fort contraire.

### LE MESSAG*ire* A HERODE

Je m'en voy, mon signeur;  
attendeis unc pitit de heure.

### LE MESSAG*ire* AZ CLERC

Reuerens sire et tresnoble (noble) maistre;  
Herode, *nostre* roy, at de vos, affaire;  
*par* moy vos mande salut notable.  
Ilh luy est soruenue chose inenarrable,  
par coy vos prie qu'à luy veneis,  
à vos le veult tout dire et conteir.

### LES CLERC ET MAISTE A MESSAG*ire*

A luy yrons mult volentire,  
car de obeir à ly sumes appareilhiez.

### HERODE AZ CLERC

Dit moy où Jhesucrist doit naistre  
*qui* de monde seirat sire et maistre.

### LES CLERC ET MAISTRE DOCTE*ur*

Or escouteis, roy trespuissant,  
je vos diraie en veriteit del enfant



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

dont nos en quereis maintenant;  
 sachiez, noble roy et bons signeur,  
 qu'il nasterat en Bethleem  
 asseis pres de Iherusalem  
 et che trouons en nos escript,  
 que les prophete nos ont laisiet.

## HERODE A PEUPLE

Or entendeis, mon bien amez peuple,  
 je enten chose fort meruelleuse:  
 car, solonc les dis de mes clerc,  
 unc aultre roy serat *signeur* et maistre,  
 et est jà neis en Bethleem;  
 ons le dit partout Iherusalem.  
 Je prens congiet à vos, mon peuple;  
 à paine que je ne crieue de doeulle;  
 je ne vos gouverneraie plus;  
 che poise moy; adieu mon peuple!

## UNC POR TOUT LE PEUPLE

O Herode! redoubté roy!  
 entendeis, parlez à nos!  
 Jamais aultre roy ne prendrons  
 ne à ly ne obeisseries;  
 et de tout vos reconforteis,  
 car nos *vous* tenrons loyalté  
 et jamais en *nostre* terre  
 n'arons aultre roy ne maistre  
 et, se unc aultre veult regneir,  
 nos le tverons sens demoree.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

CHI MANDE HERODE LES ROY ET FAIT LYE CHIRE.

HERODE

Or vengne auant, mon messagire,  
car grant besongne m'est soruenue.

LE MESAG*ire*

Tres redoubteit et puissant roy,  
queil chose vos plaist? dit le moy.

HERODE

Alleis et moy amyneis les roy  
et dit qu'il viengnent parler à moy!

LE MESAG*ire*

A vostre comandement,  
tresnoble prinche, yraie prestement.

LE MESAG*ire* AZ ROY

Sachies, mes signeur roy,  
que Herode, nostre maistre et roy,  
vos salue de par moy,  
hublement, comedoit faire roy,  
et par grande amour vos prie  
qu'il vos plaist de venire  
legirement parler à luy!

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

JASPAR

Mult volentire sa volenté  
ferons toust, sens demoree,  
et à luy volentire parlerons,  
car chose nouolle sauoir porens.

CHI S'EN VONT LES ROY A HERODE ET L'ESTOIL  
ABSCONSE.

[JASPAR] LES ROY A HERODE  
Dieu vos garde! mon signeur  
et vos donne huy bon jour!

HERODE

Vos soïies les biens venus,  
mes bons et loyaul *signeur*!

HERODE A JASPAR

Coment, mon *signeur*, vos est ilh?  
Dont veneis en cest païs?  
Dit moy, s'il vos plaist, *vostre* non  
et *queil* est *vostre* terre et region.

JASPAR

Je vien ychi de mon païs  
et *par* trop longe voie me suy maris,  
mains, *par* l'ayde de Dieu,  
suy chi venus en XII jour;  
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C O M E C H R I S T M A S

par non, suy Jaspar nomeit,  
et Arabie est ma cyté.

HERODE A MELCHIOR

O noble signeur roy!  
tourneis vos, parleis à moy!  
je vos prie amiablement  
*que* vostre non sache vraiment.  
Vostre cyté et vostre terre  
moy poreis dire, s'il vos plaist?

MELCHIOR

Sachies, Herode! mon amis,  
*que* mes terre et mon païs  
est mult longe de cest cyté,  
mains, à l'ayde de Dieu, suy chi ariué;  
Melchior est mon non  
et suy de Tharse, noble region.

HERODE A BALTHAZAR

O tresgentilz signeur roy!  
escouteis, parleis à moy,  
humblement vos require  
*que* *vostrenon* et terre vos plaist dire,  
car j'aperchois mult bien  
*que* asteis laseis de chemin.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## BALTHAZAR

Mon seigneur! tresnoble roy!  
puis *que* *vostre* plaisir est de sauoir  
de mon non et de mon estre tout le voir,  
tresuolentire, le vos diraie en bone foy:  
neis et roy coroneit suy de la cyté de Saba,  
la *que*il est une tresnoble cyté royal;  
si moy suy de mon païs partis,  
XII jour at, sens point mentir.  
De chemin suy fort lasseit,  
car je vin de longe contree;  
et mon nom est *partout* tresbien cognus;  
Balthazar appelleit je suy!

## HERODE AZ ROY

He! mes tresnoble *seigneur* roy!  
maintenant bien cognoy  
*que* les voie ne saueis;  
dit moy *qui* vos at chi amynez  
et por coy entrepresis si grande jornee.

## JASPAR

Nos summes tres bons astronomien  
et les sainte escripture entendons bien;  
*par* elle auons cognissance certaine  
*que* le roy de roy est neis an Bethleem.

## HERODE AZ ROY

Je prie à grant dieu Mahon  
*qui* vos met huy en bonne an!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

HERODE

Or beuons et mengons  
et bone chire faisons,  
por la onor de roy nouuellement nez,  
car je le veulle aleir aoreir.

CHI MENGENT ROY AUEUC HERODE.

QUANT ARONT MENGIET.

JASPAR

Coment asteis chi ariueis,  
tous III, de si longe contree?

JASPAR

Sachies, Herode, gentil roy,  
*que* à nos est apparuit une estoille  
*par* la *que*il auons cognissance  
*que* le roy des roy at pris nascence.

LE PREMIERE CHEUALIER

Por coy sont venus cest roy  
à si grant compaignie et conroy?  
Qu'es che qu'il dyent? sont il fols?  
Il parlent d'unc autre roy.

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## LE II<sup>e</sup> CHEUALIER

Nos sauons mult bien  
que d'aulture roy n'est il nient  
que nostre bons maistre Herode  
que de tout le monde est roy.

## LE III<sup>e</sup> CHEUALIER

Et se maintenant ie sauoie  
qu'il y eust unc aulture roy,  
je le tweroie sens delaise,  
car il ne regneroit point sor mon maistre.

## HERODE

O mes tresloyal *signeur*!  
je vos prie que demoreis chi huy  
et vos plaist souppeir aueuc moy,  
aueuc *vostre* conpaingnie et conroy  
et je vos feraie bone chire,  
car je vos voy mult volentire.

## JASPAR

Dieu merchis et vos, mon *signeur*!  
Nos ne ferons plus chi demeure.  
Le jour nos anuitie fort  
et auons encore mult longe voie.  
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# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

MELCHIOR

Sachies, noble *signeur*,  
*que* ce n'est point por default d'amor  
*que* nos no partons si toust;  
vostre compaignie est mult douche,  
mains c'est *par* grant desire et amor  
*que* auons à noueal roy.

BALTHAZAR

Or nos couient de chi *partir*;  
le jour nos est fort anuitye;  
hastons nos, mes chire *signeur*,  
car nos n'auons *plus* de demour.

CHI SE PARTENT LES ROY.

HERODE

Allez, *messigneur*, en Bethleem,  
et enquereis de roy nouel;  
quant vos l'areis troueis,  
si vos priie, *par* grant *humilité*,  
*que*, *par* moy, vos retourneis.  
Che *que* areis fait, moy noncereis,  
puis nos porons assembleir  
por le pitit roy aoreir.

JASPAR A HERODE

Sire! vostre comandement  
ferons volentire et lyement,



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

et, se autre chose ne nos soruient,  
par vos retournerons volentire.

JASPAR AZ ROY

Aueis vos bien entendut et oyt  
ce *que* cest chevalire ont dit?  
Je les aie mult bien oyut,  
mains nient trop entendus.

MELCHIOR

Sachies, *messigneurs*, sens mentir,  
*que* je les aie oyu dire,  
s'il puillent le pitit roy troueir,  
*que bien* toust le yront tueur.

BALTHAZAR

Bien les aie entendus  
et à leur manire bien veyut  
qu'il ne sont point de nos *partie*,  
ne leur maistre, je vos affie,  
*comebien* qu'il nos at fait bone chire.

L'ESTOILLE SE DOIT MOUSTREIR.

JASPAR

Hoc *signum* magni regis est;  
*eamus* et *inquiramus eum* et  
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## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

offeramus ei munera: aurum,  
thus et mirram.

### JASPAR A DIEU LE PERE

O souerain Dieu le pere tout puissant!  
nos vos prions et humblement supplions  
qui nos donneiz vostre grasse et (et) benediction,  
affin que veoir et adoreir vostre chire enfan  
    puissions,  
et en (end) la fin de nos jour auoir saluacion.

### DIEU LE PERE

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis etc.

### QUANT LES ROY SERONT DELEZ MARIE.

### JASPAR A MARIE

Madamme, ne saueis point où est celuy  
qui est neiz roy des Juiif?  
Nos venons por le adoreir.

### MARIE

Messigneurs! celle chose deueroient sauoir de verité,  
les docteurs et maistre de celle cyté.

### JASPAR

O madamme! n'aueis vus dont point de fils?

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

MARIE

Messigneurs! j'en aie unc, *par* la grace de Saint  
Esperit.

JASPAR

Treschire dame! dit nos la verité  
s'il at longe temps qu'il at esté neiz.

MARIE

Messigneur! il est ajourduy le XIII<sup>e</sup> jour  
qu'il fut neiz.

JASPAR

Noble damme! nos vos prions hublement  
qu'il vos plaist nos mostreir *vostre* enfan.

MARIE

Messigneurs, vechy que je tien en mon geron  
le fils de Dieu et mon enfan;  
c'est cely *qui* sostient tot le monde.

JASPAR

Madame, tres grant mercy!  
onc*que* ne vy *plus* beal fil[s].]

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(JASPAR)

Noble dame, coment at il a non?

MARIE

Jhesus est son noin.

BALTHAZAR

O salueure de monde,  
vos soïies le bien venu!  
O sire! comme est grande vostre humilité,  
quant il *vus* at pleu venire en chi monde miser-  
ab[le]  
et naistre en unc pouure estable!  
Vos qui esteis infinie en diuinité,  
vos asteis vollu restraindre en *humanité*;  
vos *qui* asteis createur,  
vos asteis vollu faire creature.  
Vos qui asteis seule *immortel*,  
vos asteis vollu faire mortel.  
O Jhesus, fils de Dieu!  
vos soïies le bien venu!  
car, *par* vostre grasce, some chi assemblez  
tous ensemble por vos adorer.

JASPAR A MELCHIOR

O *monsieur* roy de Tharse!  
à vos est il bien couenable  
*que* tout premire le aoreis  
et apres yrons en *humilité*.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

MELCHIOR A JASPAR

Non feraie! roy vailhant  
d'Arabie, mult puissant  
*par* vostre noblesce et dignité!  
premiere le offrande faire deueis.

BALTHAZAR A JASPAR

Premiere offrereis, roy d'Arabie,  
car mult grant est *vostre* desire.

JASPAR A II ROY

Puis, mes *signeur*, que c'est *vostre* volenté,  
de mirre luy offreraie asseis.

ADORATE DEUM ETC.

BALTHAZAR

Vos en yreis apres, *monsigneur*,  
por *vostre* dignité et hounour;  
*vostre* non et anchieneté  
est *por* tout le monde demostree.

MELCHIOR

Volentire, *signeur* roy de Saba,  
d'enchens luy feraie offrande.

ADORATE DEUM ETC.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## BALTHAZAR

Et puis que del enchense l'offert ly aueis,  
de mon or, à grant planté,  
luy voraie de bon cuer presentier,  
puis comencherons à retourner.

OMNES DE SABA ETC.

## JASPAR A JOSEPH

O noble home et de grant saintité,  
diseis nos, unc pitit, de cest natiuité,  
car nos cognissons vraiment,  
que c'est unc roy neis nouvellement  
et le sume venus *de longe* aoreir.

## JOSEPH

Sachies, mes bien ameis *signeur*,  
qu'il at esteit conchuipts  
par l'owre de Sainte Esperit,  
qui at oeuurez sa grasce en ley.

## MELCHIOR

O mon chire amis,  
quant neis, où fut il mis?

## JOSEPH

En la creppe subz le four,  
por default d'une pitit couche.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

BALTHAZAR

Hey! Dieu! où est *vostre* sale royale  
et *vostre* couche imperiale?  
Où sont *vostre* *chevalier* et vos *chambrier*,  
qui *doient* estre apresté por vos *servir*?  
Nos nos *deuons* bien haïr,  
quant *nostre* createur est si *pourement* mis,  
nos *habondans* en richesse  
et *nostre* roy est mis en la creppe.

JASPAR A *Nostre* DAMME

Or adieu! tres douce damme!  
à vos *comandons* corps et arme.

MELCHIOR A I<sup>H</sup>ESUS

Adieu! tres douels I<sup>H</sup>esus!  
ce poise moy que ne puy chi demoreir plus.

BALTHAZAR

Adieu! noble dame souveraine,  
qui asteis mere à roy tres haltains!  
Adieu! tout la *compaignie*!  
de Dieu puissies estre benye.

*Nostre* DAMME

Dieu le pere *vus* veulh conduire  
et myneir tous III à porte de salu[t]!  
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# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

[LE III<sup>e</sup>] L'ANGELE AZ III ROY

Entendez, *signeur* roy!  
Escouteis, parleis à moy!  
Gardeis *que*, quant, en yreis,  
qu'à Herode ne retorneis;  
car, s'il vos poiit tenir,  
à la mort vos ferat venir.

[JASPAR] LES III ROY

Loweis soit Dieu de maieiteit,  
*qui* nos at de mort gardeit!

LA FIN DE JEUX

Vos *qui* aueis volu oyr  
nos jeux et esbatement,  
nos vos requerons humblement  
qu'il le vos [plaist] à en greit prendre;  
et s'il y at riens *que* reprendre,  
si le nos veulhies pardonneir,  
car n'auons volu viseir  
à faire chose desplaisante  
à *persone qui* soit viuant.  
Si prie à nostre *signeur* Ihesucrist,  
qu'il garde tout la compaignie  
et en paix nos laise demoreir,  
affin *que*, en la fin, nos puissions en sa gloire aleir!  
Che nos ottriie Dieu et Sainte Marie!  
Prendeis en greit, je vos en prie!

EXPLICIT

Per MANUS BOURLET



C O M E C H R I S T M A S



XIV. THE TILLE THEKERS

*The Journey to Bethlehem; the birth of Jesus*

[PERSONS OF THE PLAY

JOSEPH

MARIA]

[SCENE I, *Bethlehem, a cattle shed.*]

Jos. All weldand God in Trinite,  
I pray þe, lord, for thy grete myght,  
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C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Vnto thy symple seruand see,  
Here in þis place wher we are pight,  
oure self allone; 6  
Lord, graunte vs gode herberow þis night  
within þhis wone.

For we haue sought both vppe and doune,  
Thurgh diuerse stretis in þis cite,  
So mekill pepull is comen to towne,  
Þat we can nowhare herbered be,  
þer is slike prees;  
For suthe I can no socoure see,  
but belde vs with þere bestes.

And yf we here all nyght abide,  
We shall be stormed in þis steede;  
þe walles are doune on ilke a side,  
þe ruffe is rayned aboven oure hede,  
als haue I roo,  
Say, Marie doughtir, what is thy rede?

How sall we doo?

For in grete nede nowe are we stedde,  
As þou thy selffe the soth may see,  
For here is nowthir cloth ne bedde,  
And we are weyke and all werie,  
and fayne wolde rest.  
Now, gracious god, for thy mercie!  
wisse vs þe best.

Mar. God will vs wisse, full wele witt 3e,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Per-fore, Joseph, be of gud chere,  
 For in þis place borne will he be  
 Þat sall vs saue fro sorowes sere,  
                                     boþe even and morne.  
 Sir, witte 3e wele he tyme is nere,  
                                     hee will be borne.

Jos. Þan behoves vs bide here stille,  
 Here in þis same place all þis nyght.

Mar. 3a, sir, forsuth it is Goddis will.

Jos. Þan wolde I fayne we had sum light,  
                                     what so befall.  
 It waxis right myrke vnto my sight,  
                                     and colde withall.

I will go gete vs light for-thy,  
 And fewell fandē with me to bryng.

[*Goes out.*]

Mar. All weldand God yow gouerne and gy,  
 As he is sufferayne of all thyng  
                                     fo[r]his grete myght,  
 And lende me grace to his louyng  
                                     þat I me dight.

Nowe in my sawle grete ioie haue I,  
 I am all cladde in comforte clere,  
 Now will be borne of my body  
 Both God and man to-gedir in feere.  
                                     Blist mott he be!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Jesus! my son þat is so dere,  
nowe borne is he.

*[Mary worships the child.]*

Hayle my lord God! hayle prince of pees!

Hayle my fadir, and hayle my sone!

Hayle souereyne sege all synnes to sess!

Hayle God and man in erth to wonne!

Hayle! thurgh whos myht

All þis worlde was first be-gonne,

merknes and light.

Sone, as I am sympill sugett of thyne,

Vowchesaffe, swete sone I pray þe,

That I myght þe take in þe[r] armys of myne,

And in þis poure wede to arraie þe;

Graunte me þi blisse!

As I am thy modir chosen to be

in sothfastnesse.

*[SCENE II, Joseph outside the shed.]*

Jos. A! lorde, what the wedir is colde!

þe fellest freese þat euere I felyd,

I pray God helpe þam þat is alde,

And namely þam þat is vnwelde,

so may I saie.

Now, gud God þou be my belde,

as þou best may.

*[A sudden light shines.]*

A! lord God! what light is þis

þat comes shynyng þus sodenly?

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

I can not saie, als haue I blisse;  
When I come home vn-to Marie  
þan sall I spirre.

A! here be god, for nowe come I.

[*Re-enters the shed.*]

[SCENE III, *interior of the shed, as before.*]

Mar. 3e ar welcum sirre.

Jos. Say, Marie doghtir, what chere with þe?

Mar. Right goode, Joseph, as has been ay.

Jos. O Marie! what swete thyng is þat on thy  
kne?

Mar. It is my sone, þe soth to saye,  
þat is so gud.

Jos. Wele is me I bade þis day  
to se þis foode!

Me merueles mekill of þis light  
þat þus-gates shynes in þis place,  
For suth it is a selcouth sight!

Mar. þis hase he ordand of his grace,  
my sone so 3ing,  
A starne to be schynyng a space  
at his bering.

For Balam tolde ful longe be-forne  
How þat a sterne shulde rise full hye,  
And of a maiden shulde be borne

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

A sonne þat sall oure saffyng be  
fro caris kene.

For suth it is my sone so free,  
be whame Balam gon meene.

Jos. Nowe welcome, floure fairest of hewe,  
I shall þe menske with mayne and myght.

Hayle! my maker, hayle Crist Jesu!

Hayle, riall kyng, roote of all right!

Hayle! saueour.

Hayle, my lorde, lemer of light,  
Hayle, blessid floure!

Mar. Nowe lord! þat all þis worlde schall  
wynne,

To þe my sone is þat I saye,

Here is no bedde to laye the inne,

þerfore my dere sone, I þe praye

sen it is soo,

Here in þis cribbe I myght þe lay

betwene þer bestis two.

And I sall happe þe, myn owne dere childe,

With such clothes as we haue here.

Jos. O Marie! beholde þes beestis mylde,

They make louyng in ther manere

as þei wer men.

For-sothe it semes wele be ther chere

þare lord þei ken.

Mar. Ther lorde þai kenne, þat wate I wele,

They worshippe hym with myght and mayne;



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*THE NATIVITY*

*(Chester Plays)*

A! Ioseph, tydinges aright:  
I haue a sonne, a sweet wight.  
lord, thanked be thou, much of mighte,  
for preeved is thy postye!  
penance non I felt this night  
but right so as he in me light,  
comen is he here in my sight,  
Gods sonne, as you may see.

JOSEPH

Lord, welcome! sweet Ihesu!  
thy name thou haddest, or I the knewe;  
now leewe I the Angells wordes trewe  
that thou art a cleane maye.  
for thou art come mans blisse to brewe  
to all that thy saw will shewe;  
now mans Ioy begins to new,  
and noye to pas away.

MARIA

lord, blessed must thou be  
that simple borne art, as I see;  
to preeve the Dyvill of his posty  
comen thou art to daye.



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Dyversory is non for thee,  
therfore thy sweete body free  
in this crach shall lye with lee,  
and lapped about with heye.

TEBELLA

Ah! deare lord, heauen-kinge,  
that this is a marvelous thing!  
withoutten teene or traveyling  
a fayre sonne she has one!  
I dare well saie for soth, I wis,  
that cleane mayden this woman is,  
for shee hath borne a child with blisse,  
so wist I never none.

SALOME

be still, tebell, I thee praye;  
for that is falce, in good faye,  
was never woman cleane may,  
and had child withoutten man.  
but never the latter I will assaye,  
whether she be a cleane may

. . . . .

and know it, if I can.  
Alas! alas! alas! alas!  
mee is betyde a sorye case!  
my handes be dryed up in this place,  
that feeling none haue I!

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

vengeance on me now is light,  
for I wold tempt Gods might.  
alas! that I came here to night  
to suffer such a noye.

### ANGELUS

woman, beseech this childe of grace  
that he forgeve the thy trespas,  
and ere thou goe out of this place  
holpen thou maye be.  
this myracle that now thou seest here,  
is of Gods owne power,  
to bringe mankinde out of danger  
and mend them, leeve thou me!

### SALOME

Ah! sweet childe, I aske mercye  
for thy mothers love, marye,  
though I haue wroughte wretchedlye:  
sweete childe, forgeve yt mee!  
a! blessed be god! all whole am I!  
now leve I well and sickerlye  
that god is come man to for-bye;  
and thou, lord, thou art hee.

### EXPOSITOR

loe, lordinges, of this myracle here  
fryer Barthelomew, in good manere,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

beareth wytnes without were,  
 as played is you beforne.  
 an other myracle, if I maye,  
 I shall rehearse, or I goe awaye,  
 that befell that ilke daye  
 that Ihesu christ was borne.  
 wee read in Cronycles expresse:  
 some tyme in Rome a temple was,  
 made of so great riches  
 that wonder was wytterly.  
 for all thinges in yt—leve you me!—  
 was silver, goulde, and riche perye;  
 thyrd parte the worlde, as reade wee,  
 that temple was worthye.  
 of each provynce, that boke mynd mase,  
 ther Gods image ther set was,  
 and each one about his necke has  
 a siluer bell hanginge,  
 and on his brest wrytten also  
 the lands name and gods both twoo,  
 and set was als in myddes of tho  
 god of Rome righte as a king.  
 about the house was meving there  
 a man on horse, stood men to stere,  
 and in his hand he bare a speare,  
 all pure dispituouslie.  
 that horse and man was made of brasse,  
 turning about that Image was;  
 save certayne preistis there might none pas  
 for Devylls fantasie.

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

but when any land with battayle  
 was ready Rome for to assaile,  
 the Gods Image, without faile,  
 of that land rang his bell,  
 and turned his face dispituouslie  
 to god of Rome, as read I,  
 in tokening that they were ready  
 to fighting fresh and fell.  
 the image, also, aboue standing,  
 when the bell beneth began to ringe,  
 turned hym, all sharply showing  
 toward that land his speare.  
 and when they saw this tokening,  
 Rome ordayned without taryinge  
 an host to kepe there coming  
 long, or they came there.  
 and in this manner, sothlie,  
 by art of nigromancye,  
 all the world wytterly  
 to Rome were made to lowt.  
 And that temple there, doubtles,  
 was called, therfore, the temple of peace,  
 that through this sleight battayle can cease  
 through out the world about.  
 But he that Coyntlie this worke cast,  
 asked the Dyvill, or he past,  
 how long that temple it shold last  
 that he there can build.  
 the Devill answered suttellie,  
 and said it shold last sickerlie

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

untyll a mayden wemmouslie  
had conceived a childe.  
They hard, and beleaved, therfore,  
it shold endure for evermore;  
but that tyme that christ was bore,  
it fell downe sone in hye.  
of which house is seene this daie  
somewhat standing, in good faye,  
but no man dare goe well that way  
for feendes fantasie.  
that day was seene verament  
3 sonnes in the firmament,  
and wonderly together went,  
and turned into one.  
the oxe, the asse, there they were lent,  
honored christ in theyr intent,  
and mo myracles, as we haue ment  
to play right here anone.

SIBILLA

Sir Emperour, god the saue and see!  
looke up one height, after me!  
I tell you sicker that borne is hee  
that passeth thee of power.  
that Baron thou sees so great shall be  
as none lyke him in any degree  
to passe all kinges and eke thee,  
that borne are or ever were.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

OCTAVIANUS

Ah! Sybbill, this is a wondrous sight,  
for yonder I see a mayden bright,  
a yonge child in her armes clight,  
a bright crosse in his head.

honour I will that sweet wight  
with Incense through all my might;  
for that reverence is most right,  
vf that it be thy reade.

Incense bring, I commaund, in hie  
to honour this child, king of mercy.  
shold I be god? nay, nay! witterly  
great wrong, I wis, it were.

for this child is more worthye  
then such a thousand as am I,  
therfore to god, most mightie,  
Incense I offer here.

Ah! Sibill, hearest thou not this songe?  
my members all it goeth among,  
Ioy and blis makes my hart strong,  
to hear this melodye.

Sicker it may non other be,  
but this childe is Prynce of postie  
and I his subiect, as I see;  
he is most worthy.

SIBILLA

yea, sir, you shall leeve well this:  
somewhere in earth borne he is,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

and that he comes for mans blis,  
his tokening this can showe.  
reverence hym, I rede, I wis,  
for other god ther non is;  
that hopes otherwayes, he doth amys,  
but hym for christ to knowe.

OCTAVIAN

Sires, senators, goes home anone,  
and warne my men every echone  
that such worship I must forgone  
as they wold doe to me.  
but this child worship each man  
with full hart, all that you can,  
for he is worthy to leeve upon,  
and that now I will see.

SENATOR

a! lord, whatever this may be  
this is a wonders sight to see,  
for in the starre, as thinkes me,  
I see a full fayre maye.  
Sir, shall this child pas yee  
of worthynes and dignity!  
Such a lord, by my lewty!  
I wend never had bene none.

EXPOSITOR

Lordinges, that this is veray,  
by very signe know ye may:

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

for in Rome, in good faye,  
 ther as this thing was seene,  
 was built a Church, in noble array,  
 in worship of mary, that sweet may,  
 that yet lastes unto this day,  
 as men know that there haue bene.  
 and for to haue full memorye  
 of the angells melody,  
 and of this sight sickerlie,  
 the emperour there knewe,  
 the church is called St. Mary,  
 the surname is Ara Cæli,  
 that men know well therby  
 that this was fullie trewe.

An other myracle, I finde also,  
 at Christis birth that fell right tho  
 when salome attempted to know  
 whether shee was a may:  
 her hand roted, as you have seene,  
 wherby you may take good teene  
 that unbeleefe is a foule synne,  
 as you have seene within this playe.

Finis Paginæ Sextæ.



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*A CHRISTMAS SONG FOR THREE  
GUILDS*

TO BE SUNG A LONG TIME AGO—OR HENCE

THE CARPENTERS

St. Joseph to the Carpenters said on a Christmas  
Day:

“The master shall have patience and the ’prentice shall obey;  
And your word unto your women shall be nowise  
hard or wild:  
For the sake of me, your master, who have worshipped Wife and Child.  
But softly you shall frame the fence, and softly  
carve the door,  
And softly plane the table—as to spread it for the  
poor,  
And all your thoughts be soft and white as the  
wood or the white tree.  
But if they tear the Charter, let the tocsin speak  
for me!  
Let the wooden sign above your shop be prouder  
to be scarred  
Than the Lion-Shield of Lancelot that hung at  
Joyous Garde.”

THE SHOEMAKERS

St. Crispin to the Shoemakers said on a Christ-  
mastide:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“Who fashions at another’s feet will get no  
good of pride.

They were bleeding on the Mountain, the feet  
that brought good news,

The latchet of whose shoes we were not worthy  
to unloose.

See that your feet offend not, nor lightly lift your  
head,

Tread softly on the sunlit roads the bright dust  
of the dead.

Let your own feet be shod with peace; be lowly  
all your lives,

But if they touch the Charter, ye shall nail it with  
your knives.

And the bill-blades of the commons drive in all  
as dense array

As once a crash of arrows came, upon St. Cris-  
pin’s day.”

### THE PAINTERS

St. Luke unto the Painters on Christmas Day he  
said:

“See that the robes are white you dare to dip  
in gold and red;

For only gold the kings can give, and only blood  
the saints,

And his high task grows perilous that mixes them  
in paints.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Keep you the ancient order; follow the men that  
knew  
The labyrinth of black and white, the maze of  
green and blue;  
Paint mighty things, paint paltry things, paint silly  
things or sweet—  
But if men break the Charter, you may slay them  
in the street.  
And if you paint one post for them, then . . .  
but you know it well,  
You paint a harlot's face to drag all heroes down  
to Hell."

### ALL TOGETHER

Almighty God to all mankind on Christmas Day  
said He:

"I rent you from the old red hills, and rending,  
made you free.

There was charter, there was challenge; in a blast  
of breath I gave;

You can be all things other; you cannot be a slave.  
You shall be tired and tolerant of fancies as they  
fade,

But if men doubt the Charter, ye shall call on  
the Crusade—

Trumpet and torch and catapult, cannon and bow  
and blade,

Because it was My challenge to all the things I  
made."

G. K. CHESTERTON



### *THE VIRGIN'S CRADLE HYMN*

Dormi, Jesu! Mater ridet  
Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,  
Dormi, Jesu! blandule!  
Si non dormis, mater plorat  
Inter fila cantans orat,  
Blande, veni, somnule.

### *OUT OF BOUNDS*

A little Boy of heavenly birth,  
But far from home to-day,  
Comes down to find His ball, the Earth,  
That Sin has cast away.  
O comrades, let us one and all  
Join in to get Him back His ball!

JOHN B. TABB

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

## *THE THREE KINGS*

Three Kings came riding from far away,  
    Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;  
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,  
And they travelled by night and they slept by  
    day,  
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear,  
    That all the other stars of the sky  
Became a white mist in the atmosphere;  
And by this they knew that the coming was near  
    Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,  
    Three caskets of gold with golden keys;  
Their robes were of crimson silk, with rows  
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,  
    Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,  
    Through the dusk of night over hills and dells,  
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,  
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,  
    With the people they met at the wayside wells.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

"Of the child that is born," said Baltasar,  
"Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;  
For we in the East have seen his star,  
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,  
To find and worship the King of the Jews."

And the people answered, "You ask in vain;  
We know of no king but Herod the Great!"  
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,  
As they spurred their horses across the plain  
Like riders in haste who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jeursalem,  
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,  
Sent for the Wise men and questioned them;  
And said, "Go down unto Bethlehem,  
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away, and the star stood still,  
The only one in the gray of morn;  
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will,  
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,  
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and  
the guard,  
Through the silent street, till their horses turned  
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;  
But the windows were closed, and the doors were  
barred,  
And only a light in the stable burned.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

And cradled there in the scented hay,  
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,  
The little child in the manger lay,  
The Child that would be King one day  
Of a kingdom not human, but divine.

His mother, Mary of Nazareth,  
Sat watching beside his place of rest,  
Watching the even flow of his breath,  
For the joy of life and the terror of death  
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:  
The gold was their tribute to a King;  
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,  
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete;  
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,  
And sat as still as a statue of stone;  
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,  
Remembering what the angel had said  
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,  
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;  
But they went not back to Herod the Great,  
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,  
And returned to their homes by another way.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S



## *A CRADLE HYMN*

Hush! my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,  
House and home, thy friends provide;  
All without thy care or payment:  
All thy wants are well supplied.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

How much better thou'rt attended  
Than the Son of God could be  
When from heaven He descended  
And became a child like thee!

Soft and easy is thy cradle:  
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,  
When His birthplace was a stable  
And His softest bed was hay.

Blessèd babe! what glorious features—  
Spotless fair, divinely bright!  
Must He dwell with brutal creatures?  
How could angels bear the sight?

Was there nothing but a manger  
Cursèd sinners could afford  
To receive the heavenly stranger?  
Did they thus affront their Lord?

Soft, my child: I did not chide thee,  
Though my song might sound too hard;  
'Tis thy mother sits beside thee,  
And her arms shall be thy guard.

Yet to read the shameful story  
How the Jews abused their King,  
How they served the Lord of Glory,  
Makes me angry while I sing.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

See the kinder shepherds round Him,  
Telling wonders from the sky!  
Where they sought Him, there they found Him,  
With His Virgin mother by.

See the lovely babe a-dressing;  
Lovely infant, how He smiled!  
When He wept, the mother's blessing  
Soothed and hush'd the holy child.

Lo, He slumbers in His manger,  
Where the hornèd oxen fed:  
Peace, my darling; here's no danger,  
Here's no ox anear thy bed.

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,  
Save my dear from burning flame,  
Bitter groans and endless crying,  
That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,  
Trust and love Him all thy days;  
Then go dwell for ever near Him,  
See His face, and sing His praise!

ISAAC WATTS

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

## *A CHRISTMAS FOLK-SONG*

The little Jesus came to town;  
The wind blew up, the wind blew down;  
Out in the street the wind was bold;  
Now who would house Him from the cold?

Then opened wide a stable door,  
Fair were the rushes on the floor;  
The Ox put forth a hornèd head:  
"Come, little Lord, here make Thy bed."

Uprose the Sheep were folded near:  
"Thou Lamb of God, come, enter here."  
He entered there to rush and reed,  
Who was the Lamb of God indeed.

The little Jesus came to town;  
With ox and sheep He laid Him down;  
Peace to the byre, peace to the fold,  
For that they housed Him from the cold!

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

## *NOËL*

On a winter's night long time ago  
(*The bells ring loud and the bells ring low*),  
When high howled wind, and down fell snow  
(*Carillon, Carilla*).

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Saint Joseph he and Notre Dame,  
Riding on an ass, full weary came  
From Nazareth into Bethlehem.

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

And Bethlehem inn they stood before

*(The bells ring less and the bells ring more),*  
The landlord bade them begone from his door  
(Carillon, Carilla).

“Poor folk” (says he), “must lie where they may,  
For the Duke of Jewry comes this way,  
With all his train on a Christmas Day.”

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

Poor folk that may my carol hear

*(The bells ring single and the bells ring clear),*  
See! God’s one child had hardest cheer!  
(Carillon, Carilla).

Men grown hard on a Christmas morn;

The dumb beast by and a babe forlorn.

It was very, very cold when our Lord was born.

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

Now these were Jews as Jews must be

*(The bells ring merry and the bells ring free),*  
But Christian men in a band are we  
(Carillon, Carilla).

Empty we go, and ill-be-dight,

Singing Noël on a Winter’s night.

Give us to sup by the warm firelight,

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

HILAIRE BELLOC

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*THE LAMB*

Little Lamb, who made thee,  
Dost thou know who made thee,  
Gave thee life and bade thee feed  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;  
He is callèd by thy name,  
For He calls Himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, and He is mild,  
He became a little child.  
I a child and thou a lamb,  
We are callèd by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

WILLIAM BLAKE

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*CHILD'S EVENING HYMN*

Now the day is over,  
Night is drawing nigh,  
Shadows of the evening  
Steal across the sky.

Now the darkness gathers,  
Stars begin to peep,  
Birds and beasts and flowers  
Soon will be asleep.

Jesu, give the weary  
Calm and sweet repose;  
With thy tenderest blessing  
May our eyelids close.

Grant to little children  
Visions bright of thee;  
Guard the sailors tossing  
On the deep blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer  
Watching late in pain;  
Those who plan some evil  
From their sin restrain.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Through the long night-watches  
    May thine angels spread  
Their white wings above me,  
    Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens,  
    Then may I arise  
Pure and fresh and sinless  
    In thy holy eyes.

Glory to the Father,  
    Glory to the Son,  
And to thee, bless'd Spirit,  
    Whilst all ages run. Amen.  
                    SABINE BARING-GOULD

### *THE WORLD'S DESIRE*

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,  
His hair was like a light.  
(O weary, weary were the world,  
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,  
His hair was like a star.  
(O stern and cunning are the Kings,  
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,  
His hair was like a fire.  
(O weary, weary is the world,  
But here the world's desire.)



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,  
His hair was like a crown,  
And all the flowers looked up at him  
And all the stars looked down.

G. K. CHESTERTON



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

"What means this glory round our feet,"  
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"  
And voices chanted clear and sweet,  
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"

"What means that star," the Shepherds said,  
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"  
And angels, answering overhead,  
Sang, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

'Tis eighteen hundred years and more  
Since those sweet oracles were dumb;  
We wait for Him, like them of yore;  
Alas, He seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold,  
No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,  
That little children might be bold  
In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine  
A light like that the wise men saw,  
If we our loving wills incline  
To that sweet Life which is the Law.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

So shall we learn to understand  
The simple faith of shepherds then,  
And, clasping kindly hand in hand,  
Sing, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

But they who do their souls no wrong,  
But keep at eve the faith of morn,  
Shall daily hear the angel-song,  
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

### THE GOLDEN CAROL

*(Of Melchior, Balthazar, and Gaspar,  
the Three Kings of Cologne)*

We saw the light shine out a-far,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And straight we knew Christ's Star it was,  
Bright beaming in the morning.  
Then did we fall on bended knee,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And prais'd the Lord, who'd let us see  
His glory at its dawning.

Oh! every thought be of His Name,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
Who bore for us both grief and shame,  
Affliction's sharpest scorning.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And may we die (when death shall come),  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And see in heav'n, our glorious home,  
The Star of Christmas morning.

Old English

## CAROL

Three kings from out the Orient  
For Judah's land were fairly bent,  
To find the Lord of grace:  
And as they journeyed pleasantlie,  
A star kept shining in the sky  
To guide them to the place.  
"O Star," they cried, "by all confest  
Withouten dreed, the loveliest!"

The first was Melchior to see,  
The emperor hight of Arabye,  
An agèd man, I trow:  
He sat upon a rouncy bold,  
Had taken of the red, red gold,  
The babe for to endow.  
"O Star," he cried, "by all confest,  
Withouten dreed, the loveliest."

The next was Gaspar, young and gay,  
That held the realm of far Cathay—  
Our Jesus drew him thence—  
Yclad in silk from head to heel,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

He rode upon a high cameel,  
And bore the francincense.  
"O Star," he cried, "by all confest,  
Withouten dreed, the loveliest."

The last was dusky Balthasar,  
That rode upon a dromedar —  
His coat was of the fur.  
Dark-browed he came from Samarkand,  
The Christ to seek, and in his hand  
Upheld the bleeding myrrh.  
"O Star," he cried, "by all confest,  
Withouten dreed, the loveliest."

T. E. BROWN

*BEFORE THE PALING OF THE STARS*

Before the paling of the stars,  
Before the winter morn,  
Before the earliest cockcrow,  
Jesus Christ was born:  
Born in a stable,  
Cradled in a manger,  
In the world His hands had made  
Born a stranger.

Priest and King lay fast asleep  
In Jerusalem,  
Young and old lay fast asleep  
In crowded Bethlehem:

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Saint and Angel, ox and ass,  
Kept a watch together  
Before the Christmas daybreak  
In the winter weather.

Jesus on His Mother's breast  
In the stable cold,  
Spotless Lamb of God was He,  
Shepherd of the fold:  
Let us kneel with Mary Maid,  
With Joseph bent and hoary,  
With Saint and Angel, ox and ass,  
To hail the King of Glory.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *THE THREE KINGS*

From out Cologne there came three kings  
To worship Jesus Christ, their King;  
To him they sought fine herbs they brought  
And many a beauteous golden thing;  
They brought their gifts to Bethlehem town  
And in that manger set them down.

Then spake the first king, and he said:  
"O Child, most heavenly, bright and fair,  
I bring this crown to Bethlehem town  
For Thee, and only Thee, to wear;  
So give a heavenly crown to me  
When I shall come at last to Thee."

The second then: "I bring thee here  
This royal robe, O Child!" he cried;  
"Of silk 'tis spun and such an one  
There is not in the world beside!  
So in the day of doom requite  
Me with a heavenly robe of white!"

The third king gave his gift, and quoth:  
"Spikenard and myrrh to Thee I bring,  
And with these twain would I most fain  
Anoint the body of my King.  
So may their incense some time rise  
To plead for me in yonder skies."

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thus spake the three kings of Cologne  
That gave their gifts and went their way;  
And now kneel I in prayer hard-by  
The cradle of the Child to-day;  
Nor crown, nor robe, nor spice I bring  
As offering unto Christ my King.

Yet have I brought a gift the Child  
May not despise, however small;  
For here I lay my heart to-day,  
And it is full of love to all!  
Take Thou the poor, but loyal thing,  
My only tribute, Christ, my King.

EUGENE FIELD

## *THE SHEPHERDS HAD AN ANGEL*

The Shepherds had an Angel,  
The Wise Men had a star,  
But what have I, a little child,  
To guide me home from far,  
Where glad stars sing together,  
And singing Angels are?

Lord Jesus is my Guardian,  
So I can nothing lack:  
The lambs lie in His bosom  
Along life's dangerous track:



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The wilful lambs that go astray  
He bleeding fetches back.

Lord Jesus is my guiding star,  
My beacon light in heaven:  
He leads me step by step along  
The path of life uneven:  
He, true light, leads me to that land  
Whose day shall be as seven.

Those Shepherds through the lonely night  
Sat watching by their sheep,  
Until they saw the heavenly host,  
Who neither tire nor sleep,  
All singing "Glory, glory,"  
In festival they keep.

Christ watches me, His little lamb;  
Cares for me day and night,  
That I may be His own in heaven:  
So angels, clad in white,  
Shall sing their "Glory, glory"  
For my sake in the height.

The Wise Men left their country  
To journey morn by morn,  
With gold and frankincense and myrrh,  
Because the Lord was born:  
God sent a star to guide them  
And sent a dream to warn.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

My life is like their journey,  
Their star is like God's book;  
I must be like those good Wise Men  
With heavenward heart and look:  
But shall I give no gifts to God?  
What precious gifts they took!

Lord, I will give my love to Thee,  
Than gold much costlier,  
Sweeter to Thee than frankincense,  
More prized than choicest myrrh;  
Lord, make me dearer day by day,  
Day by day holier;

Nearer and dearer day by day,  
Till I my voice unite,  
And sing my "Glory, glory"  
With angels clad in white;  
All "Glory, glory" given to Thee  
Through all the heavenly height.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

### *BLAKE'S CRADLE SONG*

Sweet dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head:  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Sweet sleep, with soft down  
Weave thy brows an infant crown.  
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,  
All creation slept and smiled;  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace,  
Sweet babe, once like thee,  
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all,  
When he was an infant small.  
Thou his image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;  
Who became an infant small.  
Infant smiles are his own smiles;  
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

WILLIAM BLAKE, 1757-1827

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *SHOE OR STOCKING*

In Holland, children set their shoes,  
This night, outside the door;  
These wooden shoes Knecht Clobes sees,  
And fills them from his store.

But here we hang our stockings up  
On handy hook or nail;  
And Santa Claus, when all is still,  
Will plump them, without fail.

Speak out, you "Sober-sides," speak out,  
And let us hear your views;  
Between a stocking and a shoe,  
What do you see to choose?

One instant pauses Sober-sides,  
A little sigh to fetch—  
"Well, seems to me a stocking's best,  
For wooden shoes won't stretch!"

EDITH M. THOMAS



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

"EX ORE INFANTIUM"

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy  
Once, and just so small as I?  
And what did it feel like to be  
Out of Heaven, and just like me?  
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,  
And ask where all the angels were?  
I should think that I would cry  
For my house all made of sky;  
I would look about the air,  
And wonder where my angels were;  
And at waking 'twould distress me—  
Not an angel there to dress me!

Hadst Thou ever any toys,  
Like us little girls and boys?  
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all  
The angels that were not too tall,  
With stars for marbles? Did the things  
Play *Can you see me?* through their wings?  
And did thy Mother let Thee spoil  
Thy robes, with playing on *our* soil?  
How nice to have them always new  
In Heaven, because 'twas quite clean blue!

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,  
And didst Thou join thy hands, this way?

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

And did they tire sometimes, being young,  
And make the prayer seem very long?  
And dost Thou like it best, that we  
Should join our hands to pray to Thee?  
I used to think, before I knew,  
The prayer not said unless we do.  
And did thy Mother at the night  
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?  
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,  
Kiss'd, and sweet, and thy prayers said?

Thou canst not have forgotten all  
That it feels like to be small:  
And Thou know'st I cannot pray  
To Thee in my father's way?—  
So, a little Child, come down  
And hear a child's tongue like thy own;  
Take me by the hand and walk,  
And listen to my baby-talk.  
To thy Father show my prayer  
(He will look, Thou art so fair),  
And say: "O Father, I, thy Son,  
Bring the prayer of a little one."  
And He will smile, that children's tongue  
Has not changed since Thou wast young!  
FRANCIS THOMPSON

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*A LITTLE CHILD'S HYMN*

FOR NIGHT AND MORNING

Thou that once, on mother's knee,  
Wast a little one like me,  
When I wake or go to bed  
Lay thy hands about my head:  
Let me feel thee very near,  
Jesus Christ, our Saviour dear.

Be beside me in the light,  
Close by me through all the night;  
Make me gentle, kind, and true,  
Do what mother bids me do;  
Help and cheer me when I fret,  
And forgive when I forget.

Once wast thou in cradle laid,  
Baby bright in manger-shade,  
With the oxen and the cows,  
And the lambs outside the house;  
Now thou art above the sky,  
Canst thou hear a baby cry?

Thou art nearer when we pray,  
Since thou art so far away;

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thou my little hymn wilt hear,  
Jesus Christ, our Saviour dear,  
Thou that once, on mother's knee,  
Wast a little one like me.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE





C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*CHRISTMAS EVE*

Oh hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,  
The evening shades are falling,—  
Hush thee, my dear, dost thou not hear  
The voice of the Master calling?

Deep lies the snow upon the earth,  
But all the sky is ringing  
With joyous song, and all night long  
The stars shall dance with singing.

Oh hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,  
And close thine eyes in dreaming,  
And angels fair shall lead thee where  
The singing stars are beaming.

A Shepherd calls His little lambs,  
And He longeth to caress them;  
He bids them rest upon His breast,  
That His tender love may bless them.

So hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,  
Whilst evening shades are falling,  
And above the song of the heavenly throng  
Thou shalt hear the Master calling.

EUGENE FIELD

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*HOW FAR IS IT TO BETHLEHEM?*

How far is it to Bethlehem?

Not very far.

Shall we find the stable-room

Lit by a star?

Can we see the little Child?

Is He within?

If we lift the wooden latch,

May we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there—

Ox, ass, or sheep?

May we peep like them and see

Jesus asleep?

If we touch His tiny hand,

Will He awake?

Will He know we've come so far

Just for His sake?

Great kings have precious gifts,

And we have naught?

Little smiles and little tears

Are all we brought.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

For all weary children  
Mary must weep;  
Here, on His bed of straw,  
Sleep, children, sleep.

God, in his mother's arms  
Babes in the byre,  
Sleep, as they sleep who find  
Their heart's desire.

FRANCES CHESTERTON

## *CRADLE HYMN*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where  
He lay—  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! look down from the sky,  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

MARTIN LUTHER



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *CHRISTMAS ISLAND*

Fringed with coral, floored with lava,  
Three-score leagues to south of Java,  
So is Christmas Island charted  
By geographers, blind-hearted,  
—Just a dot, by their dull notion,  
On the burning Indian Ocean;  
Merely a refreshment station  
For the birds in long migration;  
Its pomegranates, custard-apples  
That the dancing sunshine dapples,  
Cocoanuts with milky hollows  
Only feast wing-weary swallows  
Or the tropic fowl there dwelling. . . .  
Don't believe a word they're telling!  
Christmas Island, though it seem land,  
Is a floating bit of dreamland  
Gone adrift from childhood, planted  
By the winds with seeds enchanted,  
Seeds of candied plum and cherry:  
Here the Christmas Saints make merry.

Even saints must have vacation;  
So they chose from all creation  
As a change from iceberg castles  
Hung with snow in loops and tassels,  
Christmas Island for a summer  
Residence. The earliest comer  
Is our own saint, none diviner,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Santa Claus. His ocean-liner  
Is a sleigh that's scudding fast.  
Mistletoe climbs up the mast,  
And the sail, so full of caper,  
Is of tissue wrapping paper.  
As he steers, he hums a carol,  
But instead of fur apparel  
Smudged with soot, he's spick and spandy  
In white linen, dear old dandy,  
With a Borealis sash on,  
And a palm-leaf hat in fashion  
Wreathed about with holly berry.  
Welcome, Santa! Rest you merry!

Next, his chubby legs bestriding  
*Such* a Yule-log, who comes riding  
Overseas, the feast to dish up.  
But—aha!—the boys' own bishop,  
Good St. Nicholas! And listen!  
Out of Denmark, old Jule-nissen,  
Kindly goblin, bent, rheumatic,  
In the milk-bowl set up attic  
For his Christmas cheer, comes bobbing  
Through the waves. He'll be hob-nobbing  
With Knecht Clobes, Dutchman true,  
Sailing in a wooden shoe.  
When the sunset gold enamels  
All the sea, three cloudy camels  
Bear the Kings with stately paces,  
Taking islands for oases,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

While a star-boat brings Kriss Kringle.  
Singing *Noel* as they mingle.  
Drinking toasts in sunshine sherry!  
How the Christmas Saints make merry!

While a gray contralto pigeon  
Coos that loving is religion,  
How they laugh and how they rollick  
How they fill the isle with frolic.  
Up the Christmas Trees they clamber,  
Lighting candles rose and amber,  
Till the sudden moonbeams glisten.  
Then all kneel but old Jule-nissen,  
(Who, a heathen elf stiff-jointed,  
Doffs his night-cap, red and pointed)  
For within the moon's pale luster  
They behold bright figures cluster;  
Their adoring eyes look on a  
Silver-throned serene Madonna,  
With the Christ-Child, rosy sweeting,  
Smiling to their loyal greeting.  
Would that on this Holy Night  
We might share such blissful sight,  
—We might find a fairy ferry  
To that isle where saints make merry.

KATHARINE LEE BATES



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *CHRISTMAS MORNING*

If Bethlehem were here today,  
Or this were very long ago,  
There wouldn't be a winter time  
Nor any cold or snow.

I'd run out through the garden gate,  
And down along the pasture walk;  
And off beside the cattle barns  
I'd hear a kind of gentle talk.

I'd move the heavy iron chain  
And pull away the wooden pin;  
I'd push the door a little bit  
And tiptoe very softly in.

The pigeons and the yellow hens  
And all the cows would stand away;  
Their eyes would open wide to see  
A lady in the manger hay,  
If this were very long ago  
And Bethlehem were here today.

And Mother held my hand and smiled—  
I mean the lady would—and she  
Would take the woolly blankets off  
Her little boy so I could see.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

His shut-up eyes would be asleep,  
And he would look just like our John,  
And he would be all crumpled too,  
And have a pinkish color on.

I'd watch his breath go in and out.  
His little clothes would all be white.  
I'd slip my finger in his hand  
To feel how he could hold it tight.

And she would smile and say, "Take care,"  
The mother, Mary, would, "Take care;"  
And I would kiss his little hand  
And touch his hair.

While Mary put the blankets back,  
The gentle talk would soon begin.  
And when I'd tiptoe softly out  
I'd meet the wise men going in.

ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

### *THE KINGS OF THE EAST*

The Kings of the East are riding  
To-night to Bethlehem.  
The sunset glows dividing,  
The Kings of the East are riding;  
A star their journey guiding,  
Gleaming with gold and gem



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The Kings of the East are riding  
To-night to Bethlehem.

To a strange sweet harp of Zion  
The starry host troops forth;  
The golden glaived Orion  
To a strange sweet harp of Zion;  
The Archer and the Lion,  
The watcher of the North;  
To a strange sweet harp of Zion  
The starry host troops forth.

There beams above a manger  
The child-face of a star;  
Amid the stars a stranger,  
It beams above a manger;  
What means this ether-ranger  
To pause where poor folk are?  
There beams above a manger  
The child-face of a star.

KATHARINE LEE BATES

*TO HIS SAVIOUR, A CHILD;  
A PRESENT, BY A CHILD*

Go prettie child, and beare this Flower  
Unto thy little Saviour;  
And tell Him, by that Bud now blown,  
He is the Rose of Sharon known:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

When thou hast said so, stick it there  
Upon His Bibb, or Stomacher:  
And tell Him, (for good handsell too)  
That thou hast brought a Whistle new,  
Made of a clean straight oaten reed,  
To charme His cries, (at time of need:)  
Tell Him, for Corall, thou hast none;  
But if thou hadst, He sho'd have one;  
But poore thou art, and knowne to be  
Even as monillesse, as He.  
Lastly, if thou canst win a kisse  
From those mellifluous lips of His;  
Then never take a second on,  
To spoile the first impression.

ROBERT HERRICK

### *CAROL*

When the herds were watching  
In the midnight chill,  
Came a spotless lambkin  
From the heavenly hill.

Snow was on the mountains,  
And the wind was cold,  
When from God's own garden  
Dropped a rose of gold.

When 'twas bitter winter,  
Houseless and forlorn,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

In a star-lit stable  
Christ the Babe was born.

Welcome, heavenly lambkin;  
Welcome golden rose;  
Alleluia, Baby  
In the swaddling clothes.

WILLIAM CANTON

### *CHRISTMAS CAROL*

God bless the master of this house,  
The mistress also,  
And all the little children,  
That round the table go,  
And all your kin and kinsmen,  
That dwell both far and near,  
I wish you a merry Christmas  
And a happy New Year.

Unknown

11399  
**La fleur des Moets**  
nouuellemēt notes en choses faictes  
imprimez en lboneur de la na  
tiuite de nre seigneur Jhes  
us christz de sa tressa  
cree mere.



I

Be merry all þat be present,  
Omnes de Saba venient.

¶ Owt of þe est a sterre shon bright  
For to shew thre kyngis light,  
Which had ferre traveled day & nyght  
To seke þat lord þat all hath sent.

¶ Therof hard kyng Herode anon,  
þat III kyngis shuld cum thorow his regyon,  
To seke a child that pere had non,  
And after them sone he sent.

¶ Kyng Herode cried to them on hye:  
"Ye go to seke a child truly;  
Go forth & cum agayn me by,  
& tell me wher þat he is lent."

¶ Forth they went by þe sterres leme,  
Till they com to mery Bethelēm;  
Ther they fond þat swet barn-teme  
That sith for vs his blode hath spent.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

¶ Balthasar kneled first a down,  
& said: "Hayll, Kyng, most of renown,  
And of all kyngis þou berist þe crown,  
Therefor with gold I the *present*."

¶ Melchior kneled down in þat stede  
& said: "Hayll, Lord, in thy pryesthede,  
Receyve ensence to thy manhede,  
I brynge it *with* a good entent."

¶ Jasper kneled down in þat stede  
& said: "Hayll, Lord, in thy knyghthede,  
I offer the myrre to thy godhede,  
For thou art he þat all hath sent."

¶ Now lordis & ladys in riche aray,  
Lyfte vp your hartis vpon this day,  
& ever to God lett vs pray,  
That on the rode was rent.

## 2

Wassaill, wassaill, wassaill, syng we,  
In woshipe of Cristis natiuite!

Now joy be to the trynyte,  
Fader, Son & Holy Goste,  
That on God is in trynite,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Fader of hevyn, of myghtis most.

Wassayll, [wassail, wassail, syng, we  
In worshipe of Cristis natiuite!]

And joy [be] to the virgyn pure,

þat euer kepte her vndefiled,

Grundid in grace, in hart full sure,

& bare a child as maydyn myld.

Wassayll, [wassail, wassail, syng we,  
In worshipe of Cristis natiuite!]

Bethelem & þe sterre so shen,

þat shon III kyngis for to gide,

Bere witnesse of this maydyn clene;

The kyngis III offred that tide.

Wassail, [wassail, wassail, syng we,  
In worshipe of Cristis naituite!]

And sheperdis hard, a[s] wretyn, is,

þe joyffull songe þat þer was songe,

“Glorya in excelsis!”

With angellis voys it was owt ronge.

Wassail, [wassail, wassail, syng we,  
In worshipe of Cristis naituite!]

Now joy be to þe blessidfull child

& joy be to his moder dere,

Joy we all of þat maydyn myld,

& joy haue they þat mak good chere!

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

3

Make we mery, bothe more & lasse,  
For now ys þe tyme of Crystmas.

Lett no man *cum* in to this hall,—  
Grome, page nor yet marshall,—  
But þat sum sport he bryng *with-all*,  
For now ys the tyme of Crystmas.

Yff that he say he can not syng,  
Sum oder sport then lett hym bryng,  
þat yt may please at thys festyng,  
For now ys the tyme of Crystmas.

Yff he say he can nowght do,  
Then for my loue aske hym no mo,  
But to the stokkis then let hym go,  
For now ys þe tyme of Crystmas.

What cher? Gud cher, gud cher, gud cher!  
Be mery & glad this gud New Yere!

“Lyft vp your hartis & be glad  
In Crystis byrth,” the angell bad;  
Say eche to oder, yf any be sade:  
What cher?



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Now þe kyng of hevyn his byrth hath take,  
Joy & myrth we owght to make,  
Say eche to oder, for hys sake:  
What cher?

I tell you all *with* hart so fre:  
Ryght welcum ye be to me;  
Be glad & mery, for charite!  
What cher?

The gudman of this place *in* fere,  
You to be mery, he prayth you here,  
& *with* gud hert he doth to you say:  
What cher?

4

Make we mery in hall & bowr,  
Thys tyme was born owr Savyowr.

In this tyme God hath sent  
Hys own Son, to be *present*,  
To dwell *with* vs in verament,  
God þat ys owr Savyowr.

In this tyme þat ys be-fall,  
A child was born in an ox stall  
& after he dyed for vs all,  
God [þat ys owr Savyowr].

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

In this tyme an angell bryght  
Mete III sheperdis vpon a nyght,  
He bade them go a-non ryght  
To God þat ys owr Saviowr.

In thys tyme now pray we  
To hym þat dyed for vs on tre,  
On vs all to haue pytee,  
God þat ys owr Saviowr.

5

Now we shuld syng & say newell,  
Quia missus est angelus Gabriell.

From hevyn was sent an angell of light  
Vnto a cyte that Nazareth hyght,  
Vnto a mayd, a bryde so bryght,  
And full of blis;  
Nomen Maria virginis.

The angell went furth, & nowght he sest;  
Be-fore that mayden he hym sone drest;  
He said: "All hayle, thou art full blest  
And gracios!  
Quia tecum est Dominus."

Whan Mary this hard, a-stoned was she,  
And thougth what thy gretying myght be;  
The angell her shewed of grace plente,  
And gret solas,  
Et dixit: "Maria, ne timeas."

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The angell sayd: "Thou maydyn myld.  
 Thou shalt conceyve & bere a chyld,  
 Thy maydynhed shall neuer defyled,  
 Call hym Jhesus:  
 Hic erat altissimi filius."

Whan Mary, as bryght as crystall stone,  
 Thes wordis hard, answered anon,  
 And asked, how all this myght be done,  
 And sayd: "How so?  
 Quia virum non cognosco."

The angell said: "Thou maydyn still,  
 The Holy Gost shall the fulfill."  
 The mayd answered *with* woyse so shryll,  
 And sayd mekely:  
 "Ecce ancilla domini!"

Sone *after* this, this chyld was borne  
 In Bedleme in a wynters morne.  
 Now make we mery hym beforne,  
 & syng newell,  
 Quia missus est angelus Gabriell.

## 6

Nova, nova: Aue fitt ex Eva.

Gabriell of hygh degre,  
 He cam down *from* the trynyte,  
 From Nazareth to Galalye.  
 vt nova.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

He mete a maydyn in a place;  
He kneled down be fore her face;  
He sayd: "Hayle, Mary, full of *grace*!"  
vt nova.

When the maydyn sawe all this,  
She was sore abashed, ywys,  
Lest that she had done a-mys.  
vt nova.

Then sayd the angell: "Dred not you,  
Ye shall *conceyve* in all vertu  
A chyld, whose name shall be *Jhesu*."  
vt nova.

Then sayd the mayd: "How may this be,  
Godis son to be born of me?  
I know not of *manys* carnalite."  
vt nova.

Then said the angell a-non ryght:  
"The Holy Gost ys on the plyght,  
*þer* ys no thyng vnpossible to God Almyght."  
vt nova.

Then sayd the angell a-non:  
"Ytt ys not fully VI moneth a-gon,  
Syth seynt Elizabeth *conceyved* seynt John."  
vt nova,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Then said the mayd a-non a-hye:

"I am Godis own truly,

*Ecce ancilla domini.*"

[vt nova.]

7

Now syng we wyth joy and blys:

*Puer natus est nobis.*

Mary, flowr of flowers all,

Hath born a chyld in an ox stall,

That lorde & prynce ys ouer vs all:

*Puer natus est nobis.*

He was born on owre Lady

With owt weme of her body,

Godys own son truly,

*Puer natus est nobis.*

By an apull of a tre

Bownd men all made were we,

That child was born to make vs fre;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

That chyld was don on the rode

Wyth hys flesshe & with hys blod,

For owr helpe & for owr gud;

*Puer natus est nobis.*

The III<sup>de</sup> day he rose & to hevyn went,

Wytt & wysedom he vs sent,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

For to kepe his cumaundment;  
*Puer natus est nobis.*

He shall cum down at domys day  
 With bloody wovndis, I you say,  
 As he dyed on Gud Fryday;  
*Puer natus est nobis.*

Now pray we to that hevyn kyng  
 To send vs all his dere blessing,  
 Shryft & hosyll at owr endyng:  
*Puer natus est nobis.*

## 8

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley! }  
 Lulley, Jhesu, lulley, lulley! } fote.

So blessid a sight it was to see,  
 How Mary rokked her son so fre!  
 So fayre she rokked & songe "by, by";  
 Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!  
 Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!  
 Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

"Myn own dere son, why wepyst þou thus?  
 Ys not thy fader kyng of blis?  
 Haue I not do þat in me ys?  
 Your grevance, tell me what it is!"  
 Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!  
 Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“Ther for moder, wepe I nowght,  
But for þe woo þat shall be wrowght  
To me, or I mankynd haue bowght.

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

Moder, þe tyme ye shall see,  
þe sorowe shall brek your hart *in* three,  
So fowle þe Jewes shall fare *with* me.

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

Whan I am nakid, they will me take,  
& fast bynd me to a stake,  
& bete me sore for *manus* sake.

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

Vpon þe crose they shall me caste,  
Honde & fote, nayle me faste;  
Yet gall shall be my drynk [at] laste;

Thus shall my lyff passe away.

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

A, dere moder! yet shall a spere  
My hart *in* sonder all to-tere;  
No wonder thowgh I carefull were.

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

Nowe, dere moder, syng lulley,

& put a-way all hevynesse;

In-to this world I toke þe way,

A-gayn to I shall me dresse,

þer joye is *withowt* end ay,

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!"

Lulley, [Jhesu, lulley, lulley!

Myn own dere moder, syng lulley!]

### 9

Tyrly tirlow, tirly terlow:

So merily the sheperdis be-gan to blow.

A-bowt the feld they pypyd ryght,

So meryly the sheperdis be-gan to blow;

A-down from hevyn þat is so hygh,—

Terly terlow, [tirly terlow]!

Angellys ther cam a cumpany

With mery songis and melady,

The sheperdis a-non that gan a-spye,

Terly terlow, [tirly terlow]!



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

"Gloria in excellcis," the angels song,  
& sayd þat pease was present a-mong  
To euery man þat the feyth wold fong,  
Terly terlow, [tirly terlow]!

The sheperdis hyed them to Bedlem,  
To se that blessyd son beme,  
And ther they fond þat glori<sup>us</sup> leme,  
Terly terlow, [tirly terlow]!

Now pray we to þat meke chyld  
And to hys moder þat ys so myld,  
The whych was never defyled,  
Terly terlow, [tirly terlow]!

10

Can I not syng but hoy,  
Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

The sheperd vpon a hill he satt,  
He had on hym his tabard & his hat,

His tarbox, hys pype & hys flagat;  
Hys name was called joly, joly Wat;  
For he was a gud herdis boy,  
Vt hoy!

For in hys pype he made so mych joy.

Can I not syng but hoy,  
Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The sheperd vpon a hill was layd,  
Hys doge to hys gyrdyll was tayd;  
He had not slept but a lytill broyd,  
But "*Gloria in excelcis*" was to hym sayd.

Vt hoy!

For *in* hys pipe he mad so myche joy.

Can I not syng but hoy,

Whan the joly shepherd made so mych joy.

The sheperd on a hill he stode,  
Rownd a-bowt hym his shepe they yode;  
He put hys hond vnder hys hode,  
He saw a star as rede as blod:

Vt hoy!

For *in* hys pipe he mad so myche joy.

Can I not sing but hoy,

Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

"Now farwell Mall & also Will,  
For my love, go ye all styll  
Vnto I cum agayn you till,  
And euermore, Will, ryng well thy bell."

Vt hoy!

For *in* his pipe he mad so mych joy.

Can I not syng but hoy,

Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

“Now must I go þer Cryst was borne;  
 Farewell! I cum a-gayn to morn.  
 Dog, kepe well my shep fro þe corn,  
 & warn well Warroke, when I blow my horn.”

Vt hoy!

For *in* hys pipe he made so mych joy.

Can I not sing but hoy,

Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

Whan Wat to Bedlem cum was,  
 He swet; he had gon faster than a pace;  
 He fownd Jhesu in a sympyll place,  
 Be-twen an ox & an asse.

Vt hoy!

For *in* his pipe *he* mad so mych joy.

Can I not syng but hoy,

Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

The shepherd sayd a-non ryght:  
 “I will go se yon farly syght,  
 Wher as þe angell syngith on hight  
 & the star þat shynyth so bryght,”

Vt hoy!

For *in* [his] pipe he made so mych joy.

Can I not syng but hoy,

Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *FRANCISCAN SONG*

Veggiamo il suo Bambino  
Gammetare nel fieno  
E le braccia scoperte  
Porgere ad ella in seno,  
Ed essa lo ricopre  
Ed meglio che puo almeno  
Mettendoli la poppa  
Entro la sua bocchina.

A la sua man manca,  
Cullava lo Bambino,  
E con sante carole  
Nenciava il suo amor fino . . .  
Cli Angioletti d'intorno  
Se ne gian danzando  
Facendo dolci versi  
E d'amor favellando.

JACOPONE DA TODI

## *THE FIRST NOWELL*

The first Nowell the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
In a cold winter's night that was so deep:

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel!*

They looked up and saw a star,  
Shining in the east, beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night:

And by the light of that same star,  
Three Wise Men came from country far;  
To seek for a king was their intent,  
And to follow the star wheresoever it went:

This star drew nigh to the northwest;  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
And there it did both stop and stay  
Right over the place where Jesus lay:

Then did they know assuredly  
Within that house the King did lie:  
One entered in then for to see,  
And found the babe in poverty:

Then entered in those Wise Men three,  
Fell reverently upon their knee,  
And offered there in his présence  
Both gold and myrrh and frankincense:

Between an ox-stall and an ass  
This child truly there born he was;  
For want of clothing they did him lay  
All in the manger, among the hay;

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
That hath made heaven and earth of naught,  
And with his blood mankind hath bought:

If we in our time shall do well,  
We shall be free from death and hell;  
For God hath preparèd for us all  
A resting place in general:

Traditional, Seventeenth Century  
(Sandys, 1833)

### GOD REST YOU MERRY

God rest you merry, Gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born upon this day,  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray:

Chorus: *O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas Day.*

In Bethlehem in Jewry  
This blessèd babe was born,  
And laid within a manger,  
Upon this blessèd morn;  
The which his mother Mary  
Nothing did take in scorn:

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

From God our heavenly Father  
A blessèd angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same,  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by name:

‘Fear not,’ then said the angel,  
‘Let nothing you affright,  
This day is born a Saviour,  
Of virtue, power, and might;  
So frequently to vanquish all  
The friends of Satan quite:’

The shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoicèd much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding,  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
This blessèd babe to find:

But when to Bethlehem they came,  
Whereat this infant lay,  
They found him in a manger,  
Where oxen feed on hay;  
His mother Mary kneeling,  
Unto the Lord did pray:

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

This holy tide of Christmas

All others doth deface:

Traditional (Sandys, 1833)

*THE FIVE JOYS OF THE VIRGIN*

Her bi-gynneþ þe vif Blyssen of vre leuedi  
seynte Marie.

I

Leuedy for þare blisse.

þat þu heddest at þe frume.

þo þu wistest myd iwisse.

þat *ihesuc* wolde beo þi sune.

þe hwile we beoþ. on lyue þisse.

sunnen to don is vre wune.

Help vs nv þat we ne mysse.

of þat lif þat is to cume.

II

Moder. bliþe were þu þo.

hwanne þu iseye heouen-king.

Of þe ibore wiþ-vte wo.

þat scop þe and alle þing.

Beo vre scheld from vre ivó.

and yef vs þine blessyng.

And bi-wyte vs euer-mo.

from alle kunnes suneging.



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## III

Leuedi al myd rihte.  
 þu were gled and bliþe.  
 Þo crist þureh his myhte.  
 arós from deþe to lyue.  
 Þat alle þing con dihte.  
 and wes i-boren of wyue.  
 He make vs clene and bryhte.  
 for his wundes fyue.

## IV

From þe Munt of olyuete.  
 þo þi sone to heouene steyh.  
 Þu hit by-heolde myd eye swete.  
 for he wes þin heorte neyh.  
 Þer he haueþ imaked þi sete.  
 in o stude þat is ful heyh.  
 Þer þe schulen engles grete.  
 for þu ert boþe. hende and sleyh.

## V

Þe king þat wes of þe ibore.  
 to heouene. he þe vette.  
 To þare blisse þat wes for-lore.  
*and* bi hym seolue sette.  
 Vor he hedde þe icore.  
 wel veyre he þe grette.  
 Blyþe were þu þer-vore.  
 þo engles þe imette.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Moder of Milce. *and* mayde hende.  
 ich þe bidde as i con.  
 Ne let þu noht þe world vs blende.  
 þat is ful of vre ivon.  
 Ac help vs at vre lyues ende.  
 þu þat bere god and mon.  
 And vs alle to heouene sende.  
 hwenne we schulle þis lif for-gon.

Ihesuc for þire moder bene.  
 þat is so veyr and so bryht.  
 Al so wis so heo is quene.  
 of heouene and eorþe. *and* þet is ryht.  
 Of vre sunnes make vs clene.  
*and* yef vs þat eche lyht.  
 And to heoune vs alle i-méne.  
 louerd þu bryng. for wel þu Miht.



*PERSONENT HODIE*

Personent hodie  
Voces puerulae,  
Laudantes jucundè  
Qui nobis est natus,  
Summo Deo datus,  
Et de virgineo ventre procreatus.

In mundo nascitur,  
Pannis involvitur,  
Praesepe ponitur  
Stabulo brutorum,  
Rector supernorum.  
Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.

Magi tres venerunt,  
Parvulum inquirunt,  
Parvulum inquirunt,  
Stellulam sequendo,  
Ipsam adorando,  
Aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.

Omnes clerici,  
Pariter pueri,  
Cantent ut angeli:  
Advenisti mundo,  
Laudes tibi fundo.  
Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!

*Piae Cantiones, 1582*

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*MASTERS IN THIS HALL*

Masters in this Hall,  
Hear ye news to-day  
Brought from over sea,  
And ever I you pray:

*Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!*  
*Nowell sing we clear!*  
*Holpen are all folk on earth,*  
*Born is God's son so dear:*  
*Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!*  
*Nowell sing we loud!*  
*God to-day hath poor folk raised*  
*And cast a-down the proud.*

Going o'er the hills,  
Through the milk-white snow,  
Heard I ewes bleat  
While the wind did blow:

Shepherds many an one  
Sat among the sheep,  
No man spake more word  
Than they had been asleep:  
Quoth I, 'Fellows mine,  
Why this guise sit ye?  
Making but dull cheer,  
Shepherds though ye be?'

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

'Shepherds should of right  
Leap and dance and sing,  
Thus to see ye sit,  
Is a right strange thing':

Quoth these fellows then,  
'To Bethlehem town we go,  
To see a mighty lord  
Lie in manger low':

'How name ye this lord,  
Shepherds?' then said I,  
'Very God,' they said,  
'Come from Heaven high':

Then to Bethlehem town  
We went two and two,  
And in a sorry place  
Heard the oxen low:

Therein did we see  
A sweet and goodly may  
And a fair old man,  
Upon the straw she lay:

And a little child  
On her arm had she,  
'Wot ye who this is?'  
Said the hinds to me:

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Ox and ass him know,  
Kneeling on their knee,  
Wondrous joy had I  
This little babe to see:

This is Christ the Lord,  
Masters, be ye glad!  
Christmas is come in,  
And no fold should be sad:

WILLIAM MORRIS, 1834-96



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*WEXFORD CAROL*

Good people all, this Christmas-time,  
Consider well and bear in mind  
What our good God for us has done,  
In sending his belovèd son.  
With Mary holy we should pray  
To God with love this Christmas Day;  
In Bethlehem upon that morn  
There was a blessèd Messiah born.

The night before that happy tide,  
The noble Virgin and her guide  
Were long time seeking up and down  
To find a lodging in the town.  
But mark how all things came to pass:  
From every door repelled, alas!  
As long foretold, their refuge all  
Was but an humble ox's stall.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep  
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;  
To whom God's angels did appear,  
Which put the shepherds in great fear.  
"Prepare and go," the angels said,  
"To Bethlehem, be not afraid;  
For there you'll find, this happy morn,  
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born."

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

With thankful heart and joyful mind,  
The shepherds went the babe to find,  
And as God's angels had foretold,  
They did our Saviour Christ behold.  
Within a manger he was laid,  
And by his side the virgin maid,  
Attending on the Lord of Life,  
Who came on earth to end all strife.

There were three wise men from afar  
Directed by a glorious star,  
And on they wandered night and day  
Until they came where Jesus lay.  
And when they came unto that place  
Where our beloved Messiah was  
They humbly cast them at his feet,  
With gifts of gold and incense sweet.  
Traditional, County Wexford, Ireland

### *BEN JONSON'S CAROL*

I sing the birth was born to-night,  
The author both of life and light;  
The angels so did sound it,  
And, like the ravished shepherds said,  
Who saw the light, and were afraid,  
Yet searched, and true they found it.



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The Son of God, the eternal king,  
That did us all salvation bring,  
And freed our soul from danger,  
He whom the whole world could not take,  
The Word, which heaven and earth did make,  
Was now laid in a manger.

The Father's wisdom willed it so,  
The Son's obedience knew no No;  
Both wills were in one stature,  
And, as that wisdom had decreed,  
The Word was now made flesh indeed,  
And took on him our nature.

What comfort by him we do win,  
Who made himself the price of sin,  
To make us heirs of glory!  
To see this babe, all innocence,  
A martyr born in our defence,  
Can man forget the story?

BEN JONSON, 1573-1637



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*NEW PRINCE, NEW POMP*

Behold a simple, tender Babe,  
In freezing winter night,  
In homely manger trembling lies;  
Alas! a piteous sight.

The inns are full; no man will yield  
This little Pilgrim bed;  
But forced he is with silly beasts  
In crib to shroud his head.

Despise him not for lying there;  
First what he is inquire:  
An Oriental pearl is often found  
In depth of dirty mire.

Weigh not his crib, his wooden dish,  
Nor beasts that by him feed;  
Weigh not his mother's poor attire,  
Nor Joseph's simple weed.

This stable is a Prince's court,  
The crib his chair of state;  
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,  
The wooden dish his plate.

The persons in that poor attire  
His royal liveries wear;

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The Prince himself is come from heaven:  
This pomp is praised there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight!  
Do homage to thy King;  
And highly praise this humble pomp,  
Which he from heaven doth bring.  
ROBERT SOUTHWELL

### *CHANTICLEER*

(NATIVITY)

All this night shrill chanticleer,  
Day's proclaiming trumpeter,  
Claps her wings and loudly cries,  
Mortals, mortals, wake and rise!  
See a wonder  
Heaven is under;  
From the earth is risen a Sun  
Shines all night, though day be done.

Wake, O earth, wake everything!  
Wake and hear the joy I bring;  
Wake and joy; for all this night  
Heaven and every twinkling light,  
All amazing,  
Still stand gazing.  
Angels, Powers, and all that be,  
Wake, and joy this Sun to see,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Hail, O sun, O blessèd Light,  
Sent into the world by night!  
Let thy rays and heavenly powers  
Shine in these dark souls of ours;  
For most duly  
Thou art truly  
God and man, we do confess:  
Hail, O Sun of Righteousness!

W. AUSTIN, 1587-1633

## *AD CANTUM LAETICIAE*

### I

Ad cantum laeticiae  
Nos invitat hodie  
Spes et amor patriae  
Coelestis.

### II

Natus est Emanuel,  
Quod praedixit Gabriel,  
Unde Sanctus Daniel  
Est testis.

### III

Ergo nos cum gaudio,  
Nostra simul concio,  
Benedicat Domino  
Jubilo, *Piae Cantiones*

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*A VIRGIN MOST PURE*

A Virgin most pure, as the prophets do tell,  
Hath brought forth a baby, as it hath befel,  
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,  
Which Adam's transgression hath wrappèd us in:

Chorus: *And therefore be merry, set sorrows aside;  
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born on this  
tide.*

At Bethlem in Jewry a city there was,  
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,  
And there to be taxèd with many one mo',  
For Caesar commanded the same should be so:

But when they had entered the city so fair,  
A number of people so mighty was there,  
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,  
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all:

Then were they constrained in a stable to lie,  
Where horses and asses they used for to tie;  
Their lodging so simple they took it no scorn:  
But against the next morning our Saviour was  
born:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The King of all kings to this world being brought,  
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was sought;  
And when she had swaddled her young son so  
sweet,

Within an ox-manger she laid him to sleep:

Then God sent an angel from Heaven so high,  
To certain poor shepherds in fields where they lie,  
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay,  
Because that our Saviour was born on this day:  
Then presently after the shepherds did spy  
A number of angels that stood in the sky;  
They joyfully talkèd, and sweetly did sing,  
To God be all glory, our heavenly King:

Traditional

### *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

In the bleak mid-winter  
Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter  
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign:

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

In the bleak mid-winter  
A stable-place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk  
And a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and Seraphim  
Throng'd the air;  
But only His mother  
In her maiden bliss  
Worshipped the Belovèd  
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part,—  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

*THE CHERRY-TREE CAROL*

As Joseph was a-walking  
He heard an angel sing,  
"This night shall be the birth-time  
Of Christ, the heavenly King.

"He neither shall be born  
In housen nor in hall,  
Nor in the place of paradise,  
But in an ox's stall.

"He neither shall be clothèd  
In purple nor in pall,  
But in the fair white linen  
That usen babies all.

"He neither shall be rockèd  
In silver nor in gold,  
But in a wooden manger  
That resteth on the mould."

As Joseph was a-walking  
There did an angel sing,  
And Mary's child at midnight  
Was born to be our King.



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Then be ye glad, good people,  
This night of all the year,  
And light ye up your candles,  
For his star it shineth clear.

Old English

*THE HOLLY AND THE IVY*

The holly and the ivy,  
Now both are full-well grown,  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The holly bears the crown.  
O the rising of the sun,  
The running of the deer,  
The playing of the merry Organ,  
Sweet singing in the quire,  
Sweet singing in the quire.

The holly bears a blossom,  
As white as lily-flower;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
To be our sweet Saviour.  
O the rising of the sun, . . .

The holly bears a berry,  
As red as any blood;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
To do poor sinners good.  
O the rising of the sun, . . .

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The holly bears a prickle,  
As sharp as any thorn;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
On Christmas Day in the morn.  
O the rising of the sun, . . .

The holly bears a bark,  
As bitter as any gall;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
For to redeem us all.  
O the rising of the sun, . . .

The holly and the ivy,  
Now both are full well grown,  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The holly bears the crown.  
O the rising of the sun,  
The running of the deer,  
The playing of the merry Organ,  
Sweet singing in the quire,  
Sweet singing in the quire.  
Old Carol

### *CAROL*

Vines branching stilly  
Shade the open door  
In the house of Sion's lily  
Cleanly and poor.

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

O, brighter than wild laurel  
The Babe bounds in her hand!  
The King, who for apparel  
Hath but a swaddling band,  
Who sees her heavenlier smiling than  
Stars in his command.

Soon mystic changes  
Part Him from her breast:  
Yet there awhile He ranges  
Gardens of rest,  
Yea, she the first to ponder  
Our ransom and recall,  
Awhile may rock Him under  
Her young curls' fall,  
Against that only tender  
Love loyal heart of all!

What shall inure Him  
Unto the deadly dream  
When the tetrarch shall abjure Him,  
The thief blaspheme?  
And Scribe and Soldier jostle  
About the shameful Tree,  
When even the Apostle  
Demands to touch and see?  
But she hath kiss'd her Flower  
Where the wounds are to be.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

*DIES EST LETICIÆ*

## I

Dies est leticiæ in ortu regali,  
Nam processit hodie de ventre virginnali,  
Puer admirabilis, totus delectabilis  
    In humanitate,  
Qui inæstimabilis, est et ineffabilis  
    In divinitate.

## II

Orto Dei filio virgine de pura,  
Ut rosa de lilio, stupescit natura,  
Quem parit juvencula, natum ante secula,  
    Creatorum rerum,  
Quod uber munditiæ, dat lac pudicitiae,  
    Antiquo dierum.

## III

Mater hæc est filia, pater hic est natus,  
Quis audivit talia, Deus homo natus,  
Servus est et dominus, qui ubique cominus  
    Necit comprehendi,  
Præsens est et eminus, stupor ejus geminus,  
    Nequit apprehendi.

## IV

In obscuro nascitur, illustrator solis,  
Stabulo reponitur, princeps terræ molis.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Fasciatur dextera quæ affixit sidera,  
Et cœlos ascendit,  
Concrepat vagitibus, qui tonat in nubibus,  
Ac fulgur accendit.

V

Angelus pastoribus, juxta suum gregem,  
Nocte vigilantibus, natum cœli regem,  
Nunciat cum gaudio, jacentem in præsepio,  
Infantem pannosum,  
Angelorum Dominum, et præ natis hominum  
Forma speciosum.

VI

Ut vitrum non læditur, sole penetrante,  
Sic illæsa creditur, post partum et ante;  
Felix hæc puerpera cujus casta vi-cera  
Deum genuerunt,  
Et beata ubera in ætati tenera  
Christum lactaverunt.

VII

Mundus dum describitur, virgo prægnans ibat  
In Bethlem dum nascitur puer qui nos cibet,  
In cœlorum curia canebatur gloria  
Novæ dignitatis.  
Deus insublimibus det pacem hominibus  
Bonæ voluntatis,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## VIII

Christe qui nos propriis manibus fecisti,  
Et pro nobis omnibus nasci voluisti,  
Te devote petimus, laxa quod peccavimus,  
Ne nos interire  
Post mortem nos miseros, ne simul ad in eros  
Patiaris ire.

*Piæ Cantiones*

## WAKING-TIME

Neighbour, what was the sound, I pray,  
That did awake me as I lay,  
And to their doorways brought the people?  
Every one heard it like a chime  
Pealing for joy within a steeple:  
‘Get up, good folk!  
Get up, good folk, ’tis waking-time!’

Nay, then, young Martin, know you not  
That it is this our native spot  
Sweet Love has chosen for his dwelling?  
In every quarter rumours hum,  
Rumours of news beyond all telling:  
‘Wake up, good folk!  
Wake up, good folk, for Christ is come.’

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Neighbours, and is it really true,  
True that the babe so small and new,  
Is lying even now among us?  
What can we lay upon his knees—  
He whose arrival angels sung us,  
What can we give,  
What can we give the child to please?

Dickon shall bring a ball of silk,  
Peter his son a pot of milk,  
And Tom a sparrow and a linnet,  
Robin a cheese, and Ralph the half  
Part of a cake with cherries in it,  
And jolly Jack,  
And jolly Jack a little calf.

I think this child will come to be  
Some sort of workman such as we,  
So he shall have my tools and chattels,  
My well-set saw, my plane, my drill,  
My hammer that so merry rattles,  
And planks of wood,  
And planks of wood to work at will.

When we have made our offerings,  
Saying to him the little things  
Whereof all babies born are witting,  
Then we will take our leave and go,  
Bidding goodnight in manner fitting—  
Hush, hush, wee lamb,  
Hush, hush, wee lamb, dream sweetly so.

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

And in a stable though he lies,  
We in our hearts will soon devise  
Such mansions as can never shame him:  
There we will house and hold him dear,  
And through the world to all proclaim him:

‘Wake up, good folk!

Wake up, good folk, for Christ is here.’

Old French, paraphrased by

Eleanor Farjeon

TRYSTE NOËL

The Ox he openeth wide the Doore,  
And from the Snowe he calls her inne;  
And he hath seen her smile therefore,  
Our Ladye without sinne.

Now soone from Sleepe

A starre shall leap,

And soone arrive both King and Hinde;

*Amen, Amen;*

But O the Place co’d I but finde!

The Ox hath husht his Voyce and bent

Trewe eye of Pitty ore the Mow;

And on his lovelie Neck, forspent

The Blessèd lays her Browe.

Around her feet

Full warme and sweete

His bowerie Breath doth meeklie dwell;

*Amen, Amen;*

But sore am I with Vaine Travel!



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The Ox is host in Juda's stall,  
And Host of more than onely one;  
For close she gathereth withal  
Our Lorde, her little Sonne.  
Glad Hinde and King  
Their Gyfte may bring,  
But wo'd to-night my Teares were there;  
*Amen, Amen;*  
Between her Bosome and His hayre!

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

I syng of a Mayden  
That is makeles;  
Kyng of all kynges  
To her Sone che ches.

He cam al so styлле  
Where his moder was,  
As dewe in Aprylle  
That fallyt on the gras.

He cam al so styлле  
To his moder's bowr,  
As dewe in Aprylle  
That fallyt on the flour.

He cam al so styлле  
Where his moder lay,  
As dewe in Aprylle  
That fallyt on the spray,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Moder and maydyn  
Was never non but che;  
Wel may swych a lady  
Godes moder be.  
Sloane Ms., XVth Century

Qu'as-tu vu, bergère,  
Qu'as-tu vu?  
J'ai vu dans la crèche  
Un petit Enfant  
Sur la paille fraîche  
Mis bien tendrement.

Rien de plus, bergère,  
Rien de plus?  
Saint' Marie, sa mère,  
Lui fait boir' du lait,  
Saint Joseph, son père,  
Qui tremble de froid.

Rien de plus, bergère,  
Rien de plus?  
Ya le bœuf et l'âne  
Qui sont par devant;  
Avec leur haleine  
Réchauffent l'Enfant.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Rien de plus, bergère,

Rien de plus?

Ya trois petits anges

Descendus du ciel,

Chantant les louanges

Du Père Eternal.

XVIIth Century

*IESOUS AHATONNIA*

Estennialon de tson8e Ies8s ahatonnia

Onna8ate8a 'd'oki n'on8andask8aentak

Ennonchien sk8atrihotat n'on8andilonrachatha

Ies8a ahatonnia. (*ter*)

Aloki onkinnhache eronhialeronnon

Iontonk ontatiande ndio sen tsatonnnharonnion

8arie onna8ak8eton ndio sen tsatonnnharonnion

Ies8a ahatonnia. (*ter*)

Achink ontahonrask8a d'hatirih8annens

Tichion halonniondetha onh8a achia aharen

Ondaie te hahahak8a tichion halonniondetha

Ies8s ahatonnia. (*ter*)

Tho ichien stahation tethotondi Ies8s

Ahoatatende tichion stanchitea8ennion

Ahalonatorenten iatonk atsion sken

Ies8s ahatonnia. (*ter*)

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Onne ontahation chiahonalen Ies8s  
Ahatichiennonniannon kahachiahandialon  
Te honannonrank8annion ihontonk oërisen  
Ies8s ahatonnia. (*ter*)

Te ek8atatennonten ahek8achiendaen  
Ti hek8annonronk8annion de son8entenrade  
8toleti sk8annonh8e ichierhe akennonhonstha  
Ies8s ahatonnia. (*ter*)  
*Huron Indian.*

### JÉSUS EST NÉ

Hommes, prenez courage, Jésus est né!  
Maintenant que le règne du diable est détruit,  
N'écoutez plus ce qu'il dit à vos esprits.  
Jésus est né!

Ecoutez les anges du ciel.  
Ne rejetez pas maintenant ce qu'ils vous ont dit.  
Marie a enfanté le Grand Esprit, comme ils vous  
l'ont dit.  
Jésus est né!

Trois chefs se donnèrent parole  
En voyant l'étoile au firmament;  
Et ils convinrent de suivre l'étoile.  
Jésus est né!

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Alors Jésus leur suggéra l'idée de venir Le voir  
Et la pensée que l'étoile les conduirait vers Lui;  
Et ils se dirent donc qu'ils iraient vers l'étoile.

Jésus est né!

Ces chefs firent des offrandes; en voyant Jésus  
Ils furent heureux, et lui racontèrent de grandes  
choses;

Ils Le saluèrent et lui parlèrent sincèrement.

Jésus est né!

A présent venez tous Le prier.

Adorez-Le. Il a exaucé nos vœux,

Ecoutez-Le. Il veut que vous soyez saints.

Jésus est né!

*French Trans. of Huron Indian Carol*

## BURGUNDIAN CAROL

Lor qu'an lai saison qu'ai jaule  
Au monde Jésus-Chri vin,  
L'âne et le beu l'échaufin  
De lo sôfle dans l'étaule;  
*Que d'âne et de beu je sai*  
*Dan cé Royaumme de Gaule,*  
*Que d'âne et de beu je sai*  
*Qui n'an airein pa tan fai!*

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

On di que cé pôvre bête  
N'ure pa vu le Pôpon  
Qu'elle se mire ai genon  
Humbleman boissan lai tête.  
*Que d'âne et de beu je sai  
Qui po tô se fon dé fête,  
Que d'âne et de beu je sai  
Qui n'an airein pa tan fai!*

Ma le pu béa de l'histoire,  
Ce fu que l'âne et le beu  
Ansin passire tô deu  
Lai neù san maingé ni boire.  
*Que d'âne et de beu je sai,  
Couvar de pane et de moire,  
Que d'âne et de beu je sai  
Qui n'an airein pa tan fai!*  
GUY BAROZAI

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Lacking samite and sable,  
Lacking silver and gold,  
The Prince Jesus in the poor stable  
Slept, and was three hours old.

As doves by the fair water,  
Mary, not touched by sin,  
Sat by Him—the King's daughter,  
All glorious within.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

A lily without one stain, a  
Star where no spot hath room—  
Ave, gratia plena,  
Virgo Virginum.

Clad not in pearl-sewn vesture,  
Clad not in cramoisie,  
She hath hushed, she hath cradled to rest, her  
God the first time on her knee.

Where is one to adore Him?  
The ox hath dumbly confessed,  
With the ass, meek kneeling before Him,  
“Et homo factus est.”

Not throned on ivory or cedar,  
Not crowned with a Queen's crown,  
At her breast it is Mary shall feed her  
Maker, from Heaven come down.

The trees in Paradise blossom  
Sudden, and its bells chime—  
She giveth Him, held to her bosom,  
Her immaculate milk the first time.

The night with wings of angels  
Was alight, and its snow-packed ways  
Sweet made (say the Evangels)  
With the noise of their virelays.

Quem vidistis, pastores?  
Why go ye feet unshod?  
Wot ye within yon door is  
Mary, the Mother of God?

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

No smoke of spice ascending  
There—no roses are piled—  
But, choicer than all balms blending,  
There Mary hath kissed her Child.

MAY PROBYN

*AVE MARIS STELLA LUCENS*

Ave maris stella, lucens miseris,  
Deitatis cella, porta principis,  
Paradisi patens fons tu cypressus, Sion mons,  
peccatorum pons.  
Patris sub umbramine verbum caro fit per te, Sacro  
flamine.

Regis diadema, stola præfidis,  
Samsonis problema, funda Davidis,  
Turris per quam transit gens, Deum verum  
tenens ons, ne desperet flens.  
Tu es Salomonis res, in te tota nostra spes agitur  
per tres.

Mater pietatis, spes fidelium,  
Ebur castitatis, candens lilium,  
Urna cœli, manat ros, in te crevit Jesse flos, Qui  
salvavit nos  
Rubus quem non urit pyr et in cujus ponit ir Se  
cœlestis vir.

*Piæ Cantiones*



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*THE FIRST NOËL*

Jesus refulsit omnium  
Pius redemptor gentium;  
Totum genus fidelium  
Laudes celebret dramatum.

Quem stella natum fulgida  
Monstrat micans per æthera,  
Magosque duxit prævia  
Ipsius ad cunabula.

Illi cadentes parvulum  
Pannis adorant obsitum,  
Verum fatentur ut Deum  
Munus fruendo mysticum.

ST. HILARY OF POITIERS

*CHRISTMAS BELLS*

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The word repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
    A voice, a chime,  
    A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursèd mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
    And with the sound  
    The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
    And made forlorn  
    The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
    "For hate is strong,  
    And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

The wrong shall fail,  
The right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*CHRISTMAS DAY*

A baby is a harmless thing,  
And wins our heart with one accord,  
And Flower of Babies was their King,  
Jesus Christ our Lord:  
Lily of lilies He  
Upon His Mother's knee;  
Rose of roses, soon to be  
Crowned with thorns on leafless tree.

A lamb is innocent and mild,  
And merry on the soft green sod;  
And Jesus Christ, the Undeiled,  
Is the Lamb of God:  
Only spotless He  
Upon His Mother's knee;  
White and ruddy, soon to be  
Sacrificed for you and me.

Nay, lamb is not so sweet a word,  
Nor lily half so pure a name;  
Another name our hearts hath stirred,  
Kindling them to flame:  
"Jesus" certainly  
Is music and melody:  
Heart with heart in harmony  
Carol we and worship we.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

C O M E C H R I S T M A S ,

*ADESTE FIDELES*

O come, all ye faithful,  
Joyful and triumphant;  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold Him  
Born, the King of Angels;  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
Begotten, not created;  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels;  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of Heav'n above:  
"Glory to God  
All glory in the highest";  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,  
Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing;  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

*Anonymous*

### *IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR*

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold:  
Peace to the earth, good-will to men,  
From heaven's all gracious King.  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,  
With peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world:  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long.  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man at war with man hears not  
The love-song that they bring;  
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

O ye beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way,  
With painful steps and slow,  
Look now! for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing:  
Oh, rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendours fling,  
And the whole world send back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE SONS  
OF THE MORNING*

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid!  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;  
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,  
Odors of Edom and offerings divine,  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid!  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!

REGINALD HEBER



*THE BURNING BABE*

As I in hoary winter's night  
    Stood shivering in the snow,  
Surprised I was with sudden heat,  
    Which made my heart to glow;  
And lifting up a fearful eye  
    To view what fire was near,  
A pretty babe all burning bright,  
    Did in the air appear:  
Who, scorched with excessive heat,  
    Such floods of tears did shed,  
As though his floods should quench his flames,  
    Which with his tears were fed:  
"Alas!" quoth he, "but newly born,  
    In fiery heats I fry,  
Yet none approach to warm their hearts  
    Or feel my fire, but I!  
My faultless breast the furnace is,  
    The fuel wounding thorns;  
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke,  
    The ashes shames and scorns;  
The fuel Justice layeth on,  
    And Mercy blows the coals;  
The metal in this furnace wrought  
    Are men's defiled souls:  
For which, as now on fire I am,

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

To work them to their good,  
So will I melt into a bath,  
To wash them in my blood.”  
With this he vanished out of sight,  
And swiftly shrunk away,  
And straight I called unto my mind  
That it was Christmas Day.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

*O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM*

2    O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary,  
And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still,  
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us to-day.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel!

PHILLIPS BROOKS

### *A CHRISTMAS SONG*

Then from His throne the Godhead bowed  
To human form below,  
The Heavens dropt down, and every cloud  
Hung loath to let Him go.  
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,  
When, full of favour stored,  
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,  
To wait the coming Lord!

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Before His Feet went down the snow  
Amid the tranquil night,  
Till all the world lay white below  
To greet the Lord of Light.  
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,  
When, full of favour stored,  
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,  
To wait the coming Lord!

The rugged hills and all the rocks  
Were covered as with fleece;  
The towns were seen like folded flocks  
To wait the Prince of Peace.  
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,  
When, full of favour stored,  
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,  
To wait the coming Lord!

Oh, like a flock in field and fold,  
The wintry world lay then,  
On that fair night in days of old  
When Christ came down to men.  
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,  
When, full of favour stored,  
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,  
To wait the coming Lord!

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

*SHEPHERDS, REJOICE*

“Shepherds, rejoice, lift up your eyes.  
And send your fears away;  
News from the region of the skies!  
Salvation’s born to-day.

“Jesus, the God whom Angels fear,  
Comes down to dwell with you;  
To-day He makes His entrance here,  
But not as monarchs do.

“No gold, nor purple swaddling-bands,  
Nor royal shining things;  
A manger for His cradle stands,  
And holds the King of kings.

“Go, shepherds, where the Infant lies,  
And see His humble throne:  
With tears of joy in all your eyes  
Go, shepherds, kiss the Son.”

Thus Gabriel sang; and straight around  
The heavenly armies throng;  
They tune their harps to lofty sound,  
And thus conclude the song:

“Glory to God that reigns above,  
Let peace surround the Earth;

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Mortals shall know their Maker's love  
At their Redeemer's birth."

Lord! and shall angels have their songs,  
And men no tunes to raise?  
O may we lose these useless tongues  
When they forget to praise!

Glory to God that reigns above,  
That pitied us, forlorn!  
We join to sing our Maker's love—  
For there's a Saviour born!

ISAAC WATTS

### *THE LIGHT OF BETHLEHEM*

'Tis Christmas Night! the snow,  
A flock unnumbered lies:  
The old Judean stars aglow,  
Keep watch within the skies.

An icy stillness holds  
The pulses of the night:  
A deeper mystery infolds  
The wondering Hosts of Light.

Till, lo, with reverence pale  
That dims each diadem,  
The lordliest, earthward bending, hail  
The Light of Bethlehem!

JOHN B. TABB

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S



## *CHRISTMAS ONCE IS CHRISTMAS STILL*

The silent skies are full of speech  
For who hath ears to hear;  
The winds are whispering each to each,  
The moon is calling to the beach,  
And stars their sacred wisdom teach  
Of Faith, and Love, and Fear.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

But once the sky its silence broke,  
And song o'erflowed the earth,  
The midnight air with glory shook,  
And Angels mortal language spoke,  
When God our human nature took  
In Christ the Saviour's birth.

And Christmas once is Christmas still;  
The gates through which He came,  
And forests wild and murmuring rill,  
And fruitful field and breezy hill,  
And all that else the wide world fill  
Are vocal with His name.

Shall we not listen while they sing  
This latest Christmas morn,  
And music hear in everything,  
And faithful lives in tribute bring  
To the great song which greets the King  
Who comes when Christ is born?

PHILLIPS BROOKS

## *CALM ON THE LISTENING EAR OF NIGHT*

Calm on the listening ear of night  
Come heaven's melodious strains,  
Where wild Judea stretches far  
Her silver-mantled plains;



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Celestial choirs from courts above  
Shed sacred glories there,  
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,  
Make music on the air.

The answering hills of Palestine  
Send back the glad reply,  
And greet from all their holy heights  
The day-spring from on high:  
O'er the blue depths of Galilee  
There comes a holier calm,  
And Sharon waves in solemn praise  
Her silent groves of palm.  
Glory to God! the lofty strain  
The realm of ether fills;  
How sweeps the song of solemn joy  
O'er Judah's sacred hills!  
"Glory to God!" the sounding skies  
Loud with their anthems ring:  
"Peace on earth, good-will to men,  
From heaven's eternal King."

Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!  
The Saviour now is born:  
More bright on Bethlehem's joyous plains  
Breaks the first Christmas morn;  
And brighter on Moriah's brow,  
Crowned with her temple spires,  
Which first proclaim the new-born light,  
Clothed with its orient fires.

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,  
And Christian hearts be cold?  
O catch the anthem that from heaven  
O'er Judah's mountains rolled!  
When nightly burst from seraph harps  
The high and solemn lay—  
“Glory to God, on earth be peace;  
Salvation comes to-day!”

EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS

### *WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED*

While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The Angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

“Fear not,” said he (for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind);  
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

“To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line  
The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
And this shall be the sign:

“The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view display'd,  
All meanly wrapt in swathing-bands,  
And in a manger laid.”

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
Appear'd a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, and thus  
Address'd their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;  
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men  
Begin, and never cease!"

NAHUM TATE

Now haue gud day, now haue gud day!  
I am Crystmas, & now I go my way.

Here haue I dwellyd *with* more & lasse  
From Halowtyde till Candylmas,  
And now must I from you hens passe;  
Now haue gud day!

I take my leve of Kyng & knyght,  
& erle, baron, & lady bryght,  
To wil~~d~~ernes I must me dyght;  
Now haue gud day!

& at þe gud lord of this hall  
I take my leve, & of gestis all.  
Me thynke I here, Lent doth call;  
Now haue gud day!

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

& at euery worthy offycer,  
Marchall, panter & butler,  
I take my leve as for this yere;  
Now haue gud day!

A-noder yere I trust I shall  
Make mery in this hall,  
Yf rest & pease in Ynglond may fall;  
Now haue gud day!

But oftyn tymes I haue hard say  
Þat he ys loth to part a-way,  
Þat oftyn byddyth 'haue gud day';  
Now haue gud day!

Now fare ye well, all *in* fere!  
Now fare ye well for all this yere!  
Yet for my sake, make ye gud cher;  
Now haue gud day!

Old English

### *A NEW YEAR'S CAROL*

Ah! dearest Jesus, Holy Child,  
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefil'd,  
Within my heart, that it may be  
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

My heart for very joy doth leap,  
My lips no more can silence keep,  
I too must sing, with joyful tongue,  
That sweetest ancient cradle song,  
    "Glory to God in highest Heaven,  
    Who unto man His Son hath given."  
While angels sing, with pious mirth,  
A glad New Year to all the earth.

MARTIN LUTHER







# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

His the doom, ours the mirth,  
When He came down to earth  
Bethlehem saw his birth;  
Ox and ass beside Him  
From the cold would hide Him.—*I-de-o, etc.*

God's bright star, o'er His head,  
Wise men three to Him led  
Kneel they low by His bed,  
Lay their gifts before Him,  
Praise Him and adore Him.—*I-de-o, etc.*

On this day angels sing;  
With their song earth shall ring  
Praising Christ, Heaven's King,  
Born on earth to save us;  
Peace and love He gave us.—*I-de-o, etc.*

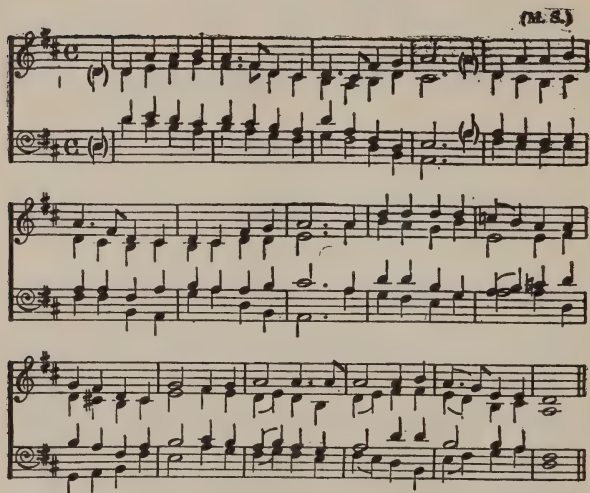
Carol





# COM E CHRISTMAS

## SOMERSET CAROL



*Traditional.*

*1744.*

Come all you worthy gentlemen  
 That may be standing by,  
 Christ our blessèd Saviour  
 Was born on Christmas Day.  
 The blessèd Virgin Mary  
 Unto the Lord did say,  
 O we wish you the comfort and tidings of joy!

Christ our blessèd Saviour  
 Now in the manger lay—  
 He's lying in the manger,  
 While the oxen feed on hay.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The blessèd Virgin Mary  
Unto the Lord did say,  
O we wish you the comfort and tidings of joy!

God bless the ruler of this house,  
And long on may he reign,  
Many happy Christmases  
He live to see again!  
God bless our generation,  
Who live both far and near,  
And we wish them a happy, a happy New Year!

*Traditional*



# COM E CHRISTMAS

## SUSSEX CAROL

VOICES IN UNISON. (R. V. W.)

On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing, To hear the news the

HARMONY, *ad lib.*

an-gels bring. On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing, To hear the news the

UNISON.

an-gels bring—

HARMONY, *ad lib.*

Traditional. 1862.

On Christmas night all Christians sing,  
 To hear the news the angels bring—  
 News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
 News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,  
 Since our Redeemer made us glad,

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

When from our sin he set us free,  
All for to gain our liberty.

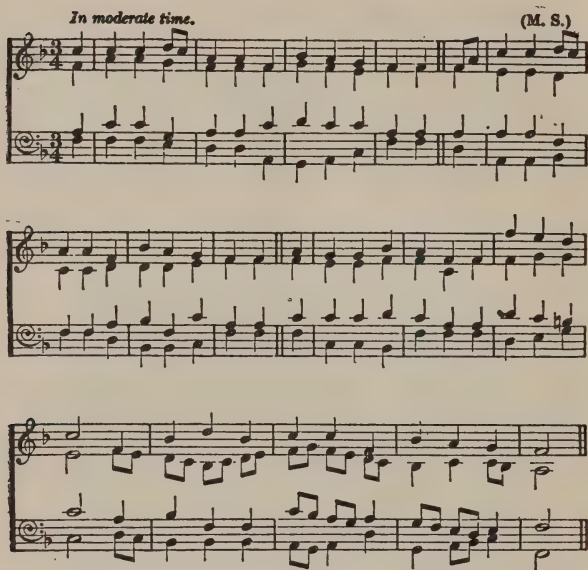
All out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night;  
'Glory to God and peace to men,  
Now and for evermore. Amen.'

*Traditional*



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## NO ROOM IN THE INN



*A Traditional tune.*

*Words, Traditional.*

When Cæsar Augustus had raised a taxation,  
 He assessed all the people that dwelt in the nation;  
 The Jews at that time being under Rome's sway  
 Appeared in the city their tribute to pay:  
 Then Joseph and Mary, who from David did  
     spring,  
 Went up to the city of David their king,  
 And, there being entered, cold welcome they  
     find.—  
 From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

They sought entertainment, but none could they  
find,

Great numbers of strangers had fillèd the inn;  
They knockèd and callèd all this at the door,  
But found not a friend where in kind they had  
store;

Their kindred accounted they come were too soon;  
“Too late,” said the innkeeper, “here is no room.”  
Amongst strangers and kinsfolk cold welcome they  
find.—

From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

Good Joseph was troubled, but most for his dear,  
For her blessèd burden whose time now drew near;  
His heart with true sorrow was sorely afflicted  
That his virgin spouse was so rudely neglected.  
He could get no house-room who houses did frame,  
But Joseph and Mary must go as they came.  
For little is the favour the poor man can find.—  
From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

. . . . .

O Bethlehem, Bethlehem, welcome this stranger  
That was born in a stable and laid in a manger;  
For he is a Physician to heal all our smart—  
Come welcome, sweet Jesus, and lodge in our  
hearts.

*Traditional (Sandys, 1833)*

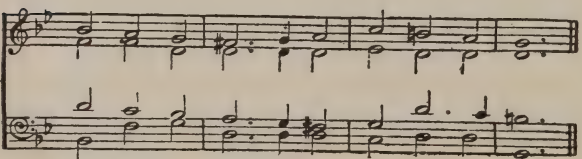
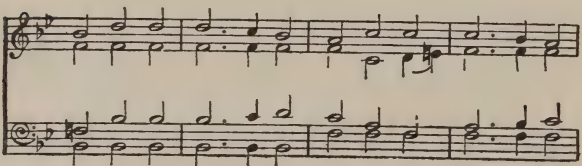
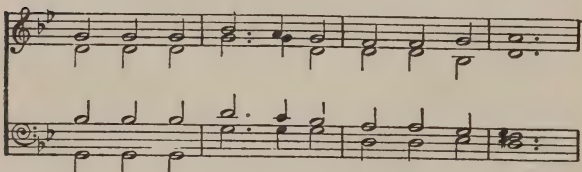
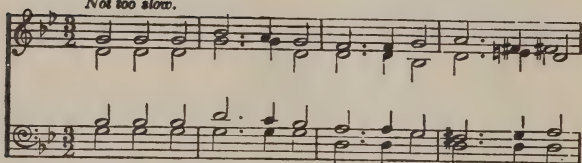
# COME CHRISTMAS

## REMEMBER

(LENT: CHRISTMAS)

(THOS. RAVENSCROFT, 1611.)

*Not too slow.*





C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Remember, O thou man,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
Remember, O thou man,  
Thy time is spent:  
Remember, O thou man,  
How thou cam'st to me then,  
And I did what I can,  
Therefore repent.

Remember God's goodness,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
Remember God's goodness  
And promise made:  
Remember God's goodness,  
How his only Son he sent,  
Our sins for to redress:  
Be not afraid.

The angels all did sing,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
The angels all did sing,  
On Sion hill:  
The angels all did sing  
Praise to our heavenly King,  
And peace to man living,  
With right good will.

To Bethlem did they go,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
To Bethlem did they go,  
This thing to see;



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

To Bethlem did they go,  
To see whether it was so,  
Whether Christ was born or no  
To set us free.

In Bethlem was he born,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
In Bethlem was he born,  
For mankind dear:  
In Bethlem was he born  
For us that were forlorn,  
And therefore took no scorn,  
Our sins to bear.

Give thanks to God always,  
O thou man, O thou man,  
Give thanks to God always,  
With hearts most jolly:  
Give thanks to God always  
Upon this blessed day;  
Let all men sing and say,  
Holy, holy.

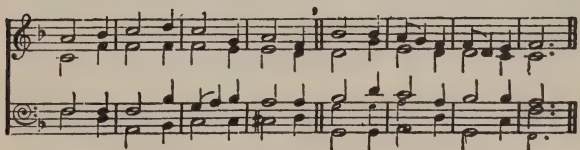
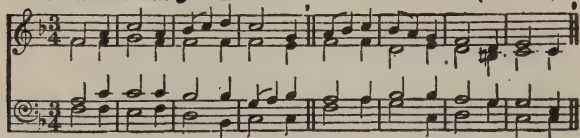
XVI Century Music in  
Ravenscroft's *Melismata*

# COM E CHRISTMAS

## QUEM PASTORES

*In moderate time. ♩ = 144.*

(R. V. W.)



*German, 14th century.*

*Ibid.*

Quem pastores laudevere,  
Quibus angeli dixere,  
Absit vobis jam timere,  
Natus est rex gloriæ.

Ad quem magi ambulabant,  
Aurum, thus, myrrham portabant,  
Immolabant hæc sincere  
Nato regi gloriæ.

Christo regi, Deo nato,  
Per Mariam nobis dato,  
Merito resonet vere  
Laus, honor et gloria.

*V. Triller, 1555*

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## BUNYAN'S HYMN

*Fairly quickly and with fervour.*

Key E<sup>b</sup>

He who would valiant be 'gainst all dis-as-ter  
 { 1 d : - r | m : d | m . f : s | l : - s : - | s : d | t , : d }

Let - him in con-stant-cy, fol-  
 { l : - : - | d : - r | m : d | m . f : s | l : - s : - }

low the Mas-ter. There's no discour-age-  
 { l s : d | t , : d | l : - : - | s : - | d : l | t : d . t }

ment shall make him once re-lent, His  
 { l : - : - | s | m . r : d | m : f | s : - : - | d }

first avowed in - tent to be a pil-grim.  
 { l s : - s , l s : f . m | r : l | s : d | t , : d ||

He who would valiant be  
 'Gainst all disaster,  
 Let him in constancy,  
 Follow the Master.  
 There's no discouragement  
 Shall make him once relent,  
 His first avowed intent,  
 To be a pilgrim.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Who so beset him round  
With dismal stories,  
Do but themselves confound—  
His strength the more is.  
No foes shall stay his might,  
Though he with giants fight:  
He will make good his right  
To be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, thou dost defend  
Us with Thy Spirit,  
We know we at the end  
Shall life inherit.  
Then fancies flee away!  
I'll fear not what men say,  
I'll labour night and day  
To be a pilgrim.

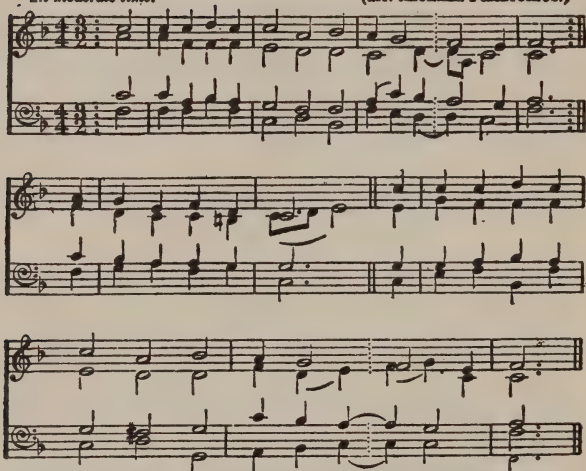


# COM ECHRISTMAS

## ES IST EIN' ROS'

*In moderate time.*

(arr. MICHAEL PRAETORIUS.)



The barring of this tune is necessarily irregular. But its performance will be found to be easy if it is remembered that the time-value of a crotchet is the same throughout.

German, 15th century.

TMA

Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen  
 Aus einer Wurzel zart,  
 Als uns die Alten sangen:  
 Aus Jesse kam die Art;  
 Und hat ein Blümlein bracht,  
 Mitten im kalten Winter,  
 Wohl zu der halben Nacht.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Das Röslein, das ich meine,  
Davon Jesaias sagt,  
Ist Maria die reine,  
Die uns dies Blümlein bracht;  
Aus Gottes ew'gem Rat  
Hat sie ein Kindlein g'boren,  
Ist blieb'n ein' reine Magd.

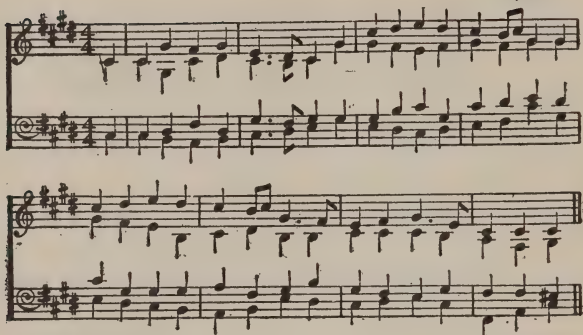
Wir bitten dich von Herzen,  
Maria, Rose zart,  
Durch dieses Blümlein's Schmerzen,  
Die er empfunden hat,  
Wollst uns behülflich sein,  
Dass wir ihm mögen machen  
Ein' Wohnung hübsch und fein!  
*Speierschen Gesangbuch, Cologne, 1600.*



# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## A BABE IS BORN

(M. S.)



English Traditional.

15th century.

A babe is born all of a may,  
 To bring salvation unto us.  
 To him we sing both night and day  
*Veni creator Spiritus.*

At Bethlehem, that blessèd place,  
 The child of bliss now born he was;  
 And him to serve God give us grace,  
*O lux beata Trinitas.*

There came three kings out of the East,  
 To worship the King that is so free,  
 With gold and myrrh and frankincense,  
*A solis ortus cardine.*

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

The shepherds heard an angel's cry,  
A merry song that night sung he.

'Why are ye so sore aghast?'

*Jam ortus solis cardine.*

The angels came down with one cry,  
A fair song that night sung they  
In the worship of that child:

*Gloria tibi Domine.*

*Sloane Ms., XV Century*



# COME CHRISTMAS

## QUI CREAVIT CÆLUM, LULLY, LULLY, LU

The musical score is written for two staves, likely representing a piano accompaniment. The top staff begins with a 'Solo.' marking and a 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamic. It features a melody with lyrics: '1. Qui cre - a - vit cæ - lum, | Lal - ly, ly, lu, . . Nas - ci - tur in sta - bu - la, | lu, . . . . .'. Above the staff, there are markings for 'Cresce.' and 'Solo.' with corresponding lyrics: 'Lal - ly, lal - ly, lu, . .'. The bottom staff also begins with a 'Cresce.' marking and a 'By. by.' dynamic. It features a melody with lyrics: 'By. by, by, by, . . . Rex qui re - git æ - cæ - lum, | Lal - ly, lal - ly, lu, . . .'. Above the staff, there are markings for 'Cresce.' and 'Solo.' with corresponding lyrics: 'Lal - ly, lal - ly, lu, . .'. The score concludes with a 'Lak. ly, lu, . . . . .' marking.

Joseph emit panniculum, by, by, etc.,  
Mater involuit puerum, lully, etc.,  
Et ponit in presepio, by, by, etc.

Inter animalia, lully, etc.,  
Jacent mundi gaudia, by, by, etc.,  
Dulcis super omnia, lully, etc.

Lactat mater dominum, by, by, etc.,  
Osculatur parvulum, lully, etc.,  
Et adorat dominum, by, by, etc.

In sempiterna secula, by, by, etc.,  
In eternum et ultra, lully, etc.,  
Det nobis sua gaudia, by, by, etc.

*"Probably Earliest Carol Composed in England."  
Sung by Nuns of St. Mary, Chester*

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## GELOBET SEIS TU JESU CHRIST

B. Gesius. n. 1600.

2nd Sop.  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass

Ge lo bet seis tu Je - su Christ Das du  
Ge lo bet seis tu Je - su Christ Das du  
Ge lo bet seis tu Je - su Christ Das du  
Ge lo bet seis tu Je - su Christ Das du

Mensch ge - bo - ren bist von ei - ner Jung frau  
Mensch ge - bo - ren bist von ei - ner Jung frau  
Mensch ge - bo - ren bist von ei - ner Jung frau das  
Mensch ge - bo - ren bist von ei - ner Jung frau  
Mensch ge - bo - ren bist von ei - ner Jung frau

cres. ff  
das ist wahr Des frew - et sich der En - gel - schar  
fron das ist wahr Des frew - et sich der En - gel - schar  
das ist wahr Des frew - et sich der En - gel - schar  
das ist wahr Des frew - et sich der En - gel - schar

pp  
Ky - ri - e - ley - son, Ky - ri - e - ley - son.  
Ky - ri - e - ley - son, Ky - ri - e - ley - son.  
Ky - ri - e - ley - son, Ky - ri - e - ley - son.  
Ky - ri - e - ley - son, Ky - ri - e - ley - son.  
Ky - ri - e - ley - son, Ky - ri - e - ley - son.

B. Gesius Ab. 1600

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## IN NATALI DOMINI

1. In na ta li Do mi ni, Ca sti gan dent an ge li; Læ ta can tant ag mi na,  
 2. An ge li vi gil i bus, Nun ci ant pas tor i bus, Mag nâ cum læ ti ti a,  
 3. In vo lu tum fas ci la, Et par vis lin te o lis, Jus si que rant pu e rum

REPEAT.

Jam De o sit glo ri a } De us ho mo fac tus est, De us jam pla ca tus est,  
 Chris ti na ta lit i a }  
 Cre a tu rum Dom i num }

No bis pec ca to ri bus.

In natali Domini,  
 Casti gaudent angeli;  
 Læta cantant agmina,  
 Jam Deo sit gloria.  
 Deus homo factus est,  
 Deus jam placatus est,  
 Nobis peccatoribus.

Angeli vigilibus,  
 Nuncitant pastoribus,  
 Magnâ cum lætitiâ,  
 Christi natalitia. Deus, etc.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Involutum fasciis,  
Et parvis linteolis,  
Jussi quærunt puerum  
Creaturæ Dominum. Deus, etc.

In obscuro stabulo,  
Et duro præsepio,  
Invenerunt positum  
Creatorem siderum. Deus, etc.

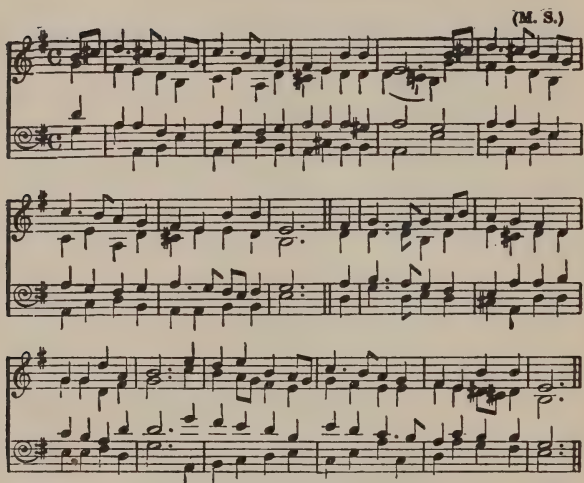
Hanc immensam gratiam  
Et miram clementiam  
Mens agnoscat pavida  
Fidens et morigera. Deus, etc.

*"Nürnberger Gesangbuch," 1544*



# COM E CHRISTMAS

## CHRISTMAS EVE



Traditional.

Fid.

The Lord at first did Adam make  
 Out of the dust and clay,  
 And in his nostrils breathèd life,  
 E'en as the Scriptures say.  
 And then in Eden's Paradise  
 He placèd him to dwell,  
 That he within it should remain,  
 To dress and keep it well:  
*Now let good Christians all begin  
 An holy life to live,  
 And to rejoice and merry be,  
 For this is Christmas Eve.*

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Now mark the goodness of the Lord

Which he for mankind bore;

His mercy soon he did extend,

Lost man for to restore:

And then, for to redeem our souls

From death and hellish thrall,

He said his own dear Son should be

The Saviour of us all:

CHORUS

Now for the blessings we enjoy,

Which are from heaven above,

Let us renounce all wickedness,

And live in perfect love:

Then shall we do Christ's own command,

E'en his own written word;

And when we die, in heaven shall

Enjoy our living Lord:

CHORUS

And now the tide is nigh at hand,

In which our Saviour came;

Let us rejoice and merry be

In keeping of the same:

Let's feed the poor and hungry souls,

And such as do it crave;

Then when we die, in heaven we

Our sure reward shall have:

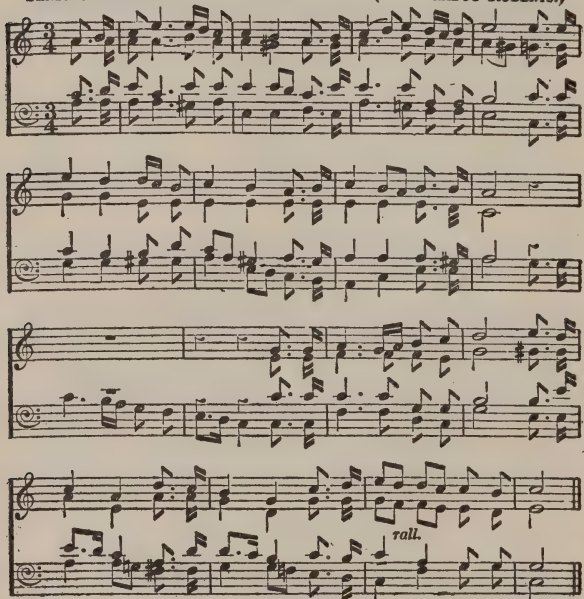
*Gilbert's "Some Ancient Christmas Carols," 1822*

# COME CHRISTMAS

## DARK THE NIGHT

SEREN BETHLEHEM.

(DR. CARADOG ROBERTS.)



Welsh.

Tr. E. E. Roberts.

Dark the night lay, wild and dreary  
 Moaned the wind by Melchior's tower,  
 Sad the sage, while pondering weary  
 O'er the doom of Judah's power:  
 When behold, the clouds are parted—  
 Westward, lo, a light gleams far!  
 Now his heart's true quest has started,  
 For his eyes have seen the star.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Now, Lord Jesus, hear our calling,  
Deep the darkness where we stray;  
How shall we, mid boulders falling,  
Know for thine the rough-hewn way?  
Lo, a light shines down to guide us  
Where thy saints and angels are!  
Now we know thy love beside us;  
For our eyes have seen the star.

*Trans. by K. E. Roberts of Welsh Carol,  
"Seren Bethlehem"*





# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## DE DRIE KONINGEN

*Allargando.*

1. Laatst wa-ren er drie Ko-nin-gen wijs zij reis-den al-o-ver het snee-uw-wit ijs

Al-o-ver't land gheel tri-om-phant, om Je-sus te soe-ken, dien weer-di-gen pand. Zij

kwa-men met ke-tels en trom-me-lee aan, Zij kwa-men met ke-tels en trom-me-lee aan.

Laatst waren er drie Koningen wijs  
 Zij reisden alover het sneeuw wit ijs  
 Alover't land gheel triomphant,  
 Om Jesus te zoeken; dien weerdigen pand.  
 Zij kwamen met ketels en trommelen aan,  
 Zij kwamen met ketels en trommelen aan.

De engel die sprak sint Joseph toe:  
 "Vlucht naar Egypten met Jesus zoet,"  
 Herodes die kwam  
 Met een groot gespan;  
 De ezel die vluchtte,  
 Maria die zuchtte,  
 Sint Joseph die troostte z'in hare droefheid.

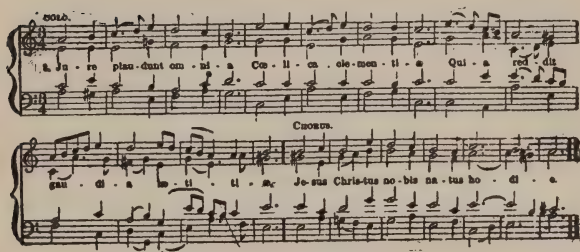
Herodes ontbood klein ende groot,  
 Alle die bloedjes ze slagen z'al dood.  
 Wie heeft ooit gehoord

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

Van zulk een moord?  
D'onnozel herten  
Vol herten en smerten  
Zij wierden in hunder bloed gesmoord.

*From "Chants Populaires Flamands"*

## JURE PLAUDUNT OMNIA



Jure plaudunt omnia  
Cœlica clementia  
Quia reddit gaudia lætitiæ,  
Jesus Christus nobis natus hodie.

Ex Maria genitus,  
Ope sancti Spiritus,  
Risum mutans gemitus lætitiæ,  
Jesus, etc.

• • • • •

Pietate solita  
Solvit Adæ debita,  
In hac valle subdita miseræ,  
Jesus, etc.

*From "Het Prieel Der Gheesteliicker  
Melodie," Verdussen, 1626*

# COM E CHRISTMAS

## HAUT, HAUT, PEYROT

*Boldly, and fairly quick.*

1 Haut, haut, Pey - rot, re - bel - het Bos an - dy loubèt sou? Qu'ey ço - quit as - sou -

me - lha. Ah! lou char - man cla rou. Lou cô be'm di - è bi - ta - re qu'a - cin

soun - lous pas - tous, Y a - ce - re luts ta cla re, La - clou - quet - te lous Bas -

tous, Be'm hen be - de ue ci - ma re car ga - de de sous.

Haut, haut, Peyrot, rebelhet  
 Bos audy loubèt sou?  
 Qu'ey çoquit assoumelhe.  
 Ah! lou charman clarou.  
 Lou cô be'm disè bitare qu'aciou sounlous pastous,  
 Y acere luts ta clare,  
 Laclouquette lous Bastous,  
 Be'm hen bede ue cimare car gade de flours.

Digues, Peyrot, tu, are,  
 Ent'oun tire Guilhem?

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

B'audi gran tintamarre  
Deu coustat de Bethleem:  
Abancem-se, courrem biste,  
Enta que pousquam leu  
Bede Jesus adourable  
Tout aymable, au bercèu;  
De Marie eth a prés lou die  
Per nous da lou Cèu.

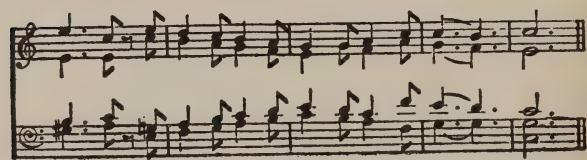
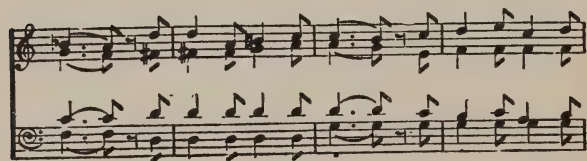
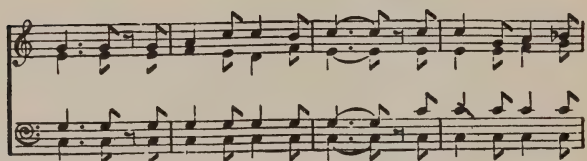
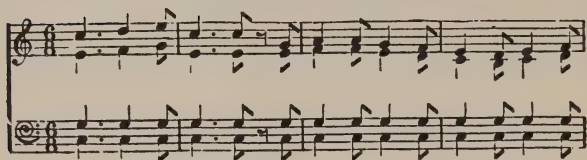
Cantem dab allegrie!  
Soune, Arnaut, deu clarou,  
A la glori d'u Messie,  
Yogue, Marc, deu biulou  
Ca, Marie, je vous prie  
Bous tabe, Yausepou,  
Cantat are la fanfarre,  
Dab Peyrot et Joandou,  
Guilhem, yogue de la guitarre  
Noël au Saubadou.

*Words by Andichon. Tradition Tune*



# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## BETHLEHEM



Dans cette étable  
Que Jésus est charmant,  
Qu'il est aimable  
Dans cet abaissement!  
Que d'attraits à la fois!

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

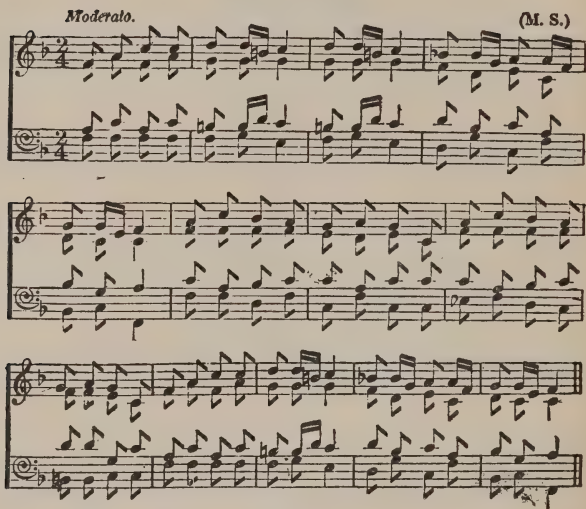
Tous les palais des rois  
N'ont rien de comparable  
Aux charmes que je vois  
    Dans cette étable!  
    Que sa puissance  
Paraît bien en ce jour,  
    Malgré 'enfance  
Où l'a réduit l'amour!  
Notre ennemi dompté,  
L'enfer déconcerté,  
Font voir qu'en sa naissance  
Rien n'est si redouté  
    Que sa puissance.

. . . . .  
Un Dieu souffre pour nous  
    Et de son père  
Appaise le courroux;  
C'est en notre faveur  
Qu'il naît dans la douleur;  
Pouvait-il pour nous plaire  
Unir à sa grandeur  
    Plus de misère?

*Old French Carol. Traditional  
Tune Arranged by Gounod*

# COM E CHRISTMAS

## ROCKING



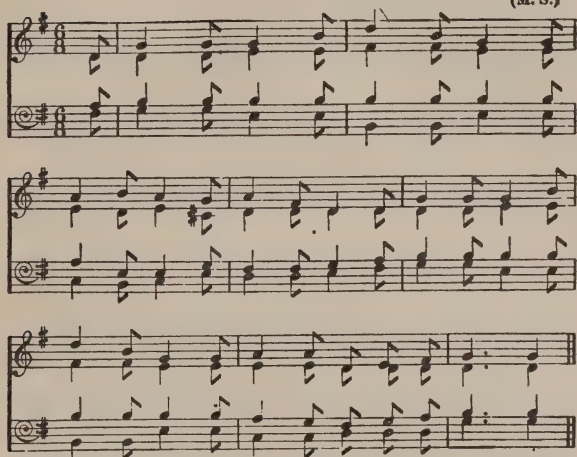
Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;  
 We will lend you a coat of fur,  
     We will rock you, rock you, rock you,  
     We will rock you, rock you, rock you:  
 See the fur to keep you warm,  
 Snugly round your tiny form.  
 Mary's little baby, sleep, sweetly sleep,  
 Sleep in comfort, slumber deep;  
     We will rock you, rock you, rock you,  
     We will rock you, rock you, rock you:  
 We will serve you all we can,  
 Darling, darling little man.

Tr. by O. B. C.  
 Old Czech Carol: "Hejejnynjej"

# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## SUNNY BANK

(M. S.)



Traditional.

1944.

As I sat on a sunny bank,  
On Christmas Day in the morning,  
I spied three ships come sailing by,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And who should be with those three ships  
But Joseph and his fair lady!

. . . . .

For joy that our Saviour he was born  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Broadside version from Husk







# COM E C H R I S T M A S

## MARY'S GIRLHOOD

This is the blessèd Mary, pre-elect  
God's virgin. Gone is a great while, and she  
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.  
Unto God's will she brought devout respect,  
Profound simplicity of intellect.  
And supreme patience. From her mother's knee  
Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity;  
Strong in grave peace; in pity circumspect.

So held she through her girlhood; as it were  
An angel-watered lily, that near God  
Grows and is quiet. Till, one day at home,  
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear  
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed:  
Because the fulness of the time was come..

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *THE BIRTH*

There is a legend that the love of God  
So quickened under Mary's heart it wrought  
Her very maidenhood to holier stuff. . . .  
However that may be, the birth befell  
Upon a night when all the Syrian stars  
Swayed tremulous before one lordlier orb  
That rose in gradual splendor,  
Paused,  
Flooding the firmament with mystic light,  
And dropped upon the breathing hills  
A sudden music  
Like a distillation from its gleams;  
A rain of spirit and a dew of song!

DON MARQUIS

## *REGINA CÆLI*

Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see  
In a mild, silent little Maid like thee,  
And was it awful, in that narrow house,  
With God for Babe and Spouse,  
Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one  
Apt to find Him in Husband and in Son,  
Nothing to thee came strange in this.  
Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss:

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Wondrous, for, though  
True Virgin lives not but does know,  
(Howbeit none ever yet confess'd,) .  
That God lies really in her breast,  
Of thine He made His special nest!  
And so  
All mothers worship little feet,  
And kiss the very ground they've trod;  
Who was indeed thy God!

COVENTRY PATMORE

### OUR LADY

Mother of God! no lady thou:  
Common woman of common earth  
*Our Lady* ladies call thee now,  
But Christ was never of gentle birth;  
A common man of the common earth.

For God's ways are not our ways.  
The noblest lady in the land  
Would have given up half her days,  
Would have cut off her right hand,  
To bear the child that was God of the land.

Never a lady did He choose,  
Only a maid of low degree,  
So humble she might not refuse  
The carpenter of Galilee:  
A daughter of the people, she.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Out she sang the song of her heart.

Never a lady so had sung.

She knew no letters, had no art;

To all mankind, in woman's tongue,

Hath Israelitish Mary sung.

And still for men to come she sings,

Nor shall her singing pass away.

*'He hath fillèd the hungry with good things'—*

Oh, listen, lords and ladies gay!—

*'And the rich He hath sent empty away.'*

MARY E. COLERIDGE

## THE SONNE

Let forrain nations of their language boast

What fine varietie each tongue affords;

I like our language, as our men and coast,

Who cannot dresse it well, want wit, not words.

How neatly do we give one onely name

To parents' issue and the sunne's bright starre!

A sonne is light and fruit; a fruitfull flame

Chasing the father's dimnesse, carried far

From the first man in the East to fresh and new

Western discov'ries of posteritie.

So in one word our Lord's humilitie

We turn upon Him in a sense most true;

For what Christ once in humblenesse began,

We Him in glorie call The Sonne of Man.

GEORGE HERBERT

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *THAT HOLY THING*

They all were looking for a king  
To slay their foes and lift them high;  
Thou cam'st, a little baby thing  
That made a woman cry.

O Son of Man, to right my lot  
Naught but Thy presence can avail;  
Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,  
Nor on the sea Thy sail!

My how or when Thou wilt not heed,  
But come down Thine own secret stair,  
That Thou mayst answer all my need—  
Yea, every bygone prayer.

GEORGE MACDONALD

## *A CHILD OF THE SNOWS*

There is heard a hymn when the panes are dim,  
And never before or again,  
When the nights are strong with a darkness long,  
And the dark is alive with the rain.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Never we know but in sleet and in snow,  
The place where the great fires are,  
That the midst of the earth is a raging mirth  
And the heart of the earth a star.

And at night we win to the ancient inn  
Where the child in the frost is furled,  
We follow the feet where all souls meet  
At the inn at the end of the world.

The gods lie dead where the leaves lie red,  
For the flame of the sun is flown,  
The gods lie cold where the leaves lie gold,  
And a Child comes forth alone.

G. K. CHESTERTON

### *THE OXEN*

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.  
"Now they are all on their knees,"  
An elder said as we sat in a flock  
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where  
They dwelt in their strawy pen,  
Nor did it occur to one of us there  
To doubt they were kneeling then.



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

So fair a fancy few would weave  
In these years! Yet, I feel,  
If some one said on Christmas Eve,  
"Come; see the oxen kneel.

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb  
Our childhood used to know,"  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

THOMAS HARDY

### *STAR OF MY HEART*

Star of my heart, I follow from afar.  
Sweet Love on high, lead on where shepherds are,  
Where Time is not, and only dreamers are.  
Star from of old, the Magi-Kings are dead  
And a foolish Saxon seeks the manger-bed.  
O lead me to Jehovah's child  
Across this dreamland lone and wild.  
Then I will speak this prayer unsaid,  
And kiss his little haloed head—  
"My star and I, we love thee, little child."

Except the Christ be born again tonight  
In dreams of all men, saints and sons of shame,  
The world will never see his kingdom bright.  
Stars of all hearts, lead onward through the night  
Past death-black deserts, doubts without a name,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Past hills of pain and mountains of new sin  
To that far sky where mystic births begin,  
Where dreaming ears the angel song shall win.  
Our Christmas shall be rare at dawning there,  
And each shall find his brother fair,  
Like a little child within:  
All hearts of the earth shall find new birth  
And wake, no more to sin.

VACHEL LINDSAY



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

## *ATTENDANTS*

The mild-eyed Oxen and the gentle Ass,  
By manger or in pasture that they graze,  
Lift their slow heads to watch us where we pass,  
A reminiscent wonder in their gaze.  
Their low humility is like a crown,  
A grave distinction they have come to wear,—  
Their look gone past us—to a little Town,  
And a white miracle that happened there.

An old, old vision haunts those quiet eyes,  
Where proud remembrance drifts to them again,  
Of something that has made them humbly wise,  
—These burden-bearers for the race of men—  
And lightens every load they lift or pull,  
Something that chanced because the Inn was full.

DAVID MORTON

## *THE SON*

Suddenly, out of my darkness, shines Thy beauty,  
O Brother;  
Brother, the light of Thy life is a blessing  
beyond all brightness.  
I am smitten blind and see the pride of the world  
no longer;

C O M E    C H R I S T M A S

I am smitten with new light that shows the  
glory of love.

Thy way is more wonderful than the way of the  
sun at noon,

For wherever Thy light falls it cleanses us from  
evil;

Thy way is more beautiful than the way of the  
moon in the evening,

For wherever Thy light falls it is healing for  
our pain;

Thy way is dearer by far than the way of the  
little stars,

For wherever Thy light falls it is leading us to  
peace;

Thy way is holier than ever the sinful lips of man  
can tell,

Thy glory is yet to burn in the hearts of all  
mankind.

I, who would sing Thy beauty, have known the  
darkness, Brother.

Oh, wash my eyes with tears that they may  
know the light of Thy love!

MARGUERITE WILKINSON

*SONNET ON THE NATIVITY*

Immensity, cloister'd in thy dear womb,  
Now leaves his well-beloved imprisonment;  
There He hath made Himself to his intent,  
Weak enough now into our world to come:

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

But oh! for thee, for Him, hath th' inn no room?  
Yet lay Him in His stall, and from th' orient  
Stars and wise men will travel, to prevent  
Th' effect of Herod's jealous general doom.  
See'st thou, my soul! with thy faith's eye, how He,  
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth lie!  
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,  
That would have need to be pitied by thee?  
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,  
With His kind mother who partakes thy woe.

JOHN DONNE

*A CHRISTMAS ANTIPHONE*

Thou whose birth on earth  
Angels sang to men,  
While Thy stars made mirth,  
Saviour, at Thy birth,  
This day born again.

As this night was bright  
With Thy cradle-ray,  
Very light of light,  
Turn the wild world's night  
To Thy perfect day.

God whose feet made sweet  
Those wild ways they trod,  
From thy fragrant feet,  
Staining field and street  
With the blood of God;

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

God whose breast is rest  
In time of strife,  
In Thy secret breast  
Sheltering souls opprest  
From the heat of life;

God whose eyes are skies,  
Love-lit as with spheres  
By the lights that rise  
To Thy watching eyes,  
Orbèd lights of tears;

God whose heart hath part  
In all grief that is,  
Was not man's the dart  
That went through Thine heart,  
And the wound not his?

Where the pale souls wail,  
Held in bonds of death,  
Where all spirits quail,  
Came Thy Godhead pale  
Still from human breath—

Pale from life and strife,  
Wan with manhood, came  
Forth of mortal life,  
Pierced as with a knife,  
Scarred as with a flame.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thou the Word and Lord  
In all time and space  
Heard, beheld, adored,  
With all ages poured  
Forth before Thy face.

Lord, what worth in earth  
Drew Thee down to die?  
What therein was worth,  
Lord, Thy death and birth?  
What beneath Thy sky?

Light above all love  
By Thy love was lit,  
And brought down the Dove  
Feathered from above  
With the wings of it.

From the height of night,  
Was not Thine the star  
That led forth with might,  
By no worldly light,  
Wise men from afar?

Yet the wise men's eyes  
Saw Thee not more clear  
Than they saw Thee rise,  
Who in shepherd's guise  
Drew as poor men near.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Yet thy poor endure,  
And are with us yet;  
Be Thy name a sure  
Refuge for Thy poor  
Whom men's eyes forget.

Thou whose ways we praise,  
Clear alike and dark,  
Keep our works and ways,  
This, and all Thy days,  
Safe inside Thine ark.

Who shall keep Thy sheep,  
Lord, and lose not one?  
Who, save one shall keep,  
Lest the shepherds sleep?  
Who beside the Son?

From the grave-deep wave,  
From the sword and flame,  
Thou, even Thou, shall save  
Souls of king and slave  
Only by Thy name.

Light not born with morn,  
Or her fires above,  
Jesus, virgin-born,  
Held of men in scorn,  
Turn their scorn to love.



# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thou whose face gives grace  
As the sun's doth heat,  
Let Thy sunbright face  
Lighten time and space  
Here beneath Thy feet.

Bid our peace increase,  
Thou that madest morn;  
Bid oppressions cease,  
Bid the night be peace,  
Bid the day be born.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE



C O M E    C H R I S T M A S

*A CHRISTMAS HYMN*

It was the calm and silent night!  
Seven hundred years and fifty-three  
Had Rome been growing up to might,  
And now was queen of land and sea.  
No sound was heard of clashing wars—  
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain:  
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars  
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!  
The senator of haughty Rome,  
Impatient, urged his chariot's flight,  
From lordly revel rolling home;  
Triumphal arches, gleaming, swell  
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;  
What recked the Roman what befell  
A paltry province far away,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago?

Within that province far away  
Went plodding home a weary boor;  
A streak of light before him lay,  
Falling through a half-shut stable-door

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Across his path. He passed—for naught  
Told what was going on within;  
How keen the stars, his only thought—  
The air how calm, and cold, and thin,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

Oh, strange indifference! low and high  
Drownsed over common joys and cares;  
The earth was still—but knew not why,  
The world was listening, unawares.  
How calm a moment may precede  
One that shall thrill the world for ever!  
To that still moment, none would heed,  
Man's doom was linked no more to sever—  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

It is the calm and solemn night!  
A thousand bells ring out, and throw  
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite  
The darkness—charmed and holy now!  
The night that erst no name had worn,  
To it a happy name is given;  
For in that stable lay, new-born,  
The peaceful prince of earth and heaven,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

ALFRED DOMMETT

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

ON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

*Rorate cœli desuper!*

Hevins, distil your balmy schouris!  
For now is risen the bricht day-ster,  
Fro the rose Mary, flour of flouris:  
The cleir Sone, quhom no cloud devouris,  
Surmounting Phebus in the Est,  
Is cumin of his hevinly touris:  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Archangellis, angellis, and dompnationis,  
Tronis, potestatis, and marteiris seir,  
And all ye hevinly operationis,  
Ster, planeit, firmament, and spheir,  
Fire, erd, air, and water cleir,  
To Him gife loving, most and lest,  
That come in to so meik maneir;  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Synnaris be glad, and penance do,  
And thank your Maker hairtfully;  
For he that ye nicht nocht come to  
To you is cumin full humbly  
Your soulis with his blood to buy  
And loose you of the fiendis arrest—  
And only of his own mercy;  
*Pro nobis Puer natus est.*

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

All clergy do to him inclyne,  
 And bow unto that bairn benyng,  
 And do your observance divyne  
 To him that is of kingis King:  
 Encense his altar, read and sing  
 In holy kirk, with mind degest,  
 Him honouring attour all thing  
*Qui nobis Puer natus est.*

Celestial foulis in the air,  
 Sing with your nottis upon hicht,  
 In firthis and in forrestis fair  
 Be myrrthful now at all your micht;  
 For passit is your dully nicht,  
 Aurora has the cloudis perst,  
 The Sone is risen with glaidsum licht,  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Now spring up flouris fra the rute,  
 Revert you upward naturally,  
 In honour of the blissit frute  
 That raiss up fro the rose Mary;  
 Lay out your levis lustily,  
 Fro deid take life now at the lest  
 In wirschip of that Prince worthy  
*Qui nobis Puer natus est.*

Sing, hevin imperial, most of hicht!  
 Regions of air mak armony!  
 All fish in flud and fowl of flicht  
 Be mirthful and mak melody!  
 All *Gloria in excelsis* cry!

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Heaven, erd, se, man, bird, and best,—

He that is crownit abone the sky

*Pro nobis Puer natus est!*

WILLIAM DUNBAR

AN ODE ON THE BIRTH OF OUR  
SAVIOUR

In Numbers, and but these few,  
I sing Thy Birth, Oh JESU!  
Thou prettie Babie, borne here,  
With sup'rabundant scorn here:  
Who for Thy Princely Port here,  
    Hadst for Thy place  
    Of Birth, a base  
Out-stable for thy Court here.

Instead of neat Inclosures  
Of inter-woven Osiers;  
Instead of fragrant Posies  
Of Daffadills, and Roses;  
Thy cradle, Kingly Stranger,  
    As Gospell tells,  
    Was nothing els,  
But, here, a homely manger.

But we with Silks, (not Crewels,)  
With sundry precious Jewells,  
And Lilly-work will dresse Thee;  
And as we dispossesse Thee  
Of clouts, wee'l make a chamber,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Sweet Babe, for Thee,  
Of Ivorie,  
And plaister'd round with Amber.

The Jewes they did disdaine Thee,  
But we will entertaine Thee  
With Glories to await here  
Upon Thy Princely State here,  
And more for love, then pittie.  
From yeere to yeere  
Wee'l make Thee, here,  
A Free-born of our Citie.

ROBERT HERRICK

*A HYMN TO THE VIRGIN*

Of on that is so fayr and bright  
*Velut maris stella,*  
Brighter than the day is light,  
*Parens et puella:*  
Ic crie to the, thou see to me,  
Levedy, preye thi Sone for me,  
*Tam pia,*  
That ic mote come to thee  
*Maria.*

Al this world was for-lore  
*Eva peccatrice,*  
Tyl our Lord was y-bore  
*De te genetrice.*

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

With *ave* it went away  
Thuster nyth and comz the day

*Salutis;*

The welle springeth ut of the,  
*Virtutis.*

Levedy, flour of al le thing,  
*Rosa sine spina,*

Thu bere Jhesu, hevene king,  
*Gratia divina:*

Of alle thu ber'st the pris,  
Levedy, quene of paradys  
*Electa:*

Mayde milde, moder *es*  
*Effecta.*

*Anonymous*

## CHRISTMAS

All after pleasures as I rid one day,  
My horse and I, both tir'd, bodie and minde,  
With full crie of affections, quite astray,  
I took up in the next inne I could finde.

There when I came, whom found I but my deare,  
My dearest Lord, expecting till the grief  
Of pleasures brought me to Him, readie there  
To be all passengers' most sweet relief.



C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

O Thou, Whose glorious yet contracted light,  
Wrapt in Night's mantle, stole into a manger,  
Since my dark soul and brutish is Thy right,  
To man, of all beasts, be not Thou a stranger:  
Furnish and deck my soul, that Thou mayst have  
A better lodging than a rack or grave.

---

The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymne for Thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too; a flock it feeds  
Of thoughts and words and deeds:  
The pasture is Thy Word; the streams Thy grace,  
Enriching all the place.

Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
Out-sing the daylight houres;  
Then we will chide the Sunne for letting Night  
Take up his place and right:  
We sing one common Lord; wherefore he should  
Himself the candle hold.

I will go searching till I finde a sunne  
Shall stay till we have done;  
A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly  
As frost-nipt sunnes look sadly:  
Then we will sing, and shine all our own day,  
And one another pay:

His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so twine,  
Till ev'n His beams sing, and my music shine.

GEORGE HERBERT

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*TO THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME,  
THE NAME OF JESUS*

A HYMN

I sing the Name which none can say  
But touched with an interior ray:  
The name of our new peace: our good:  
Our bliss: and supernatural blood:  
The name of all our lives and loves.  
Hearken, and help, ye holy doves!  
The high-born brood of Day; you bright  
Candidates of blissful light,  
The heirs elect of Love, whose names belong  
Unto the everlasting life of song;  
All ye wise souls, who in the wealthy breast  
Of this unbounded name, build your warm nest.  
Awake, my glory, Soul (if such thou be,  
And that fair word at all refer to thee),  
    Awake and sing,  
    And be all wing;  
Bring hither thy whole self; and let me see  
What of thy parent Heaven yet speaks in thee.  
    O thou art poor  
    Of noble powers, I see,  
And full of nothing else but empty me:  
Narrow, and low, and infinitely less  
Than this great morning's mighty business.  
    One little world or two

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

(Alas!) will never do;  
We must have store.  
Go, Soul, out of thyself, and seek for more.  
Go and request  
Great Nature for the key of her huge chest  
Of Heavens, the self-involving set of spheres  
(Which dull mortality more feels than hears).  
Then rouse the nest  
Of nimble Art, and traverse round  
The airy shop of soul-appeasing sound:  
And beat a summons in the same  
All-sovereign name,  
To warn each several kind  
And shape of sweetness, be they such  
As sigh with supple wind  
Or answer artful touch;  
That they convene and come away  
To wait at the love-crowned doors of this illustrious day.  
Shall we dare this, my Soul? we'll do 't and bring  
No other note for 't, but the name we sing.  
Wake lute and harp, and every sweet-lipped thing  
That talks with tuneful string;  
Start into life, and leap with me  
Into a hasty fit-tuned harmony.  
Nor must you think it much  
T'obey my bolder touch:  
I have authority in Love's name to take you,  
And to the work of Love this morning wake you.  
Wake, in the name

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Of Him Who never sleeps, all things that are,

Or, what's the same,

Are musical;

Answer my call

And come along;

Help me to meditate mine immortal song.

Come, ye soft ministers of sweet sad mirth,

Bring all your household-stuff of Heaven on  
earth;

O you, my Soul's most certain wings,

Complaining pipes, and prattling strings,

Bring all the store

Of sweets you have; and murmur that you have  
no more.

Come, ne'er to part,

Nature and Art!

Come; and come strong,

To the conspiracy of our spacious song.

Bring all the powers of praise,

Your provinces of well-united worlds can raise;

Bring all your lutes and harps of Heaven and  
Earth;

Whate'er co-operates to the common mirth

Vessels of vocal joys,

Or you, more noble architects of intellectual noise,

Cymbals of Heaven, or human spheres,

Solicitors of souls or ears;

And when you are come, with all

That you can bring or we can call:

O may you fix

C O M E : C H R I S T M A S

For ever here, and mix  
Yourselves into the long  
And everlasting series of a deathless song;  
Mix all your many worlds above,  
And loose them into one of love.  
Cheer thee my heart!  
For thou too hast thy part  
And place in the great throng  
Of this unbounded all-embracing song.  
Powers of my soul, be proud!  
And speak loud  
To all the dear-bought Nations this redeeming  
Name,  
And in the wealth of one rich word, proclaim  
New similes to Nature. May it be no wrong,  
Blest Heavens, to you and your superior song,  
That we, dark sons of dust and sorrow,  
A while dare borrow  
The name of your delights, and our desires,  
And fit it to so far inferior lyres.  
Our murmurs have their music too,  
Ye mighty Orbs, as well as you;  
Nor yields the noblest nest  
Of warbling Seraphim to the ears of Love,  
A choicer lesson than the joyful breast  
Of a poor panting turtle-dove.  
And we, low worms, have leave to do  
The same bright business (ye Third Heavens)  
with you.  
Gentle spirits, do not complain!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

We will have care  
To keep it fair,  
And send it back to you again.  
Come, lovely Name! Appear from forth the  
bright

Regions of peaceful light;  
Look from Thine Own illustrious home,  
Fair King of names, and come:  
Leave all Thy native glories in their gorgeous  
nest,

And give Thy Self a while the gracious Guest  
Of humble souls, that seek to find

The hidden sweets

Which man's heart meets

When Thou art Master of the mind.

Come, lovely Name; Life of our hope!

Lo, we hold our hearts wide ope!

Unlock Thy cabinet of Day,

Dearest Sweet, and come away.

Lo, how the labouring Earth

That hopes to be

All Heaven by Thee,

Leaps at Thy birth!

The attending World, to wait Thy rise,

First turn'd to eyes;

And then, not knowing what to do,

Turn'd them to tears, and spent them too.

Come, royal Name; and pay the expense

Of all this precious patience;

O come away

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

And kill the death of this delay!

O see so many worlds of barren years  
Melted and measured out in seas of tears:

O see the weary lids of wakeful Hope  
(Love's eastern windows) all wide ope

With curtains drawn,

To catch the day-break of Thy dawn.

O dawn at last, long-look'd-for Day!

Take Thine own wings and come away.

Lo, where aloft it comes! It comes, among  
The conduct of adoring spirits, that throng  
Like diligent bees, and swarm about it.

O they are wise,

And know what sweets are suck'd from out it:

It is the hive,

By which they thrive,

Where all their hoard of honey lies.

Lo, where it comes, upon the snowy Dove's  
Soft back; and brings a bosom big with loves;  
Welcome to our dark world, Thou womb of Day!  
Unfold thy fair conceptions, and display  
The birth of our bright joys, O Thou compacted  
Body of blessings: Spirit of souls extracted!

O dissipate Thy spicy powers,

(Cloud of condensed sweets) and break upon us

In balmy showers!

O fill our senses, and take from us

All force of so profane a fallacy,

To think ought sweet but that which smells of  
Thee!

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Fair, flowery Name, in none but Thee  
And Thy nectareal fragrancy,  
Hourly there meets  
An universal synod of all sweets;  
By whom it is definèd thus,  
That no perfume  
For ever shall presume  
To pass for odoriferous,  
But such alone whose sacred pedigree  
Can prove itself some kin (sweet Name!) to  
Thee.

Sweet Name, in Thy each syllable  
A thousand Blest Arabias dwell;  
A thousand hills of frankincense;  
Mountains of myrrh, and beds of spices  
And ten thousand Paradises,  
The soul that tastes Thee takes from thence.  
How many unknown worlds there are  
Of comforts, which Thou hast in keeping!  
How many thousand mercies there  
In Pity's soft lap lie a-sleeping!  
Happy he who has the art  
To wake them,  
And to take them  
Home, and lodge them in his heart,  
O that it were as it was wont to be!  
When Thy old friends of fire, all full of Thee,  
Fought against frowns with smiles; gave glorious  
chase  
To persecutions; and against the face



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Of Death and fiercest dangers, durst with brave  
And sober pace, march on to meet A GRAVE.

On their bold breasts, about the world they bore  
Thee,

And to the teeth of Hell stood up to teach Thee,  
In centre of their inmost souls, they wore  
Thee;

Where racks and torments strived, in vain, to  
reach Thee.

Little, alas, thought they  
Who tore the fair breasts of Thy friends,  
Their fury but made way  
For Thee, and served them in Thy glorious ends.  
What did their weapons but with wider pores  
Enlarge Thy flaming-breasted lovers,  
More freely to transpire  
That impatient fire,

The heart that hides Thee hardly covers?  
What did their weapons but set wide the doors  
For Thee? fair, purple doors, of Love's devising;  
The ruby windows which enrich'd the East  
Of Thy so oft-repeated rising!  
Each wound of theirs was Thy new morning,  
And re-enthroned Thee in Thy rosy nest,  
With blush of Thine Own Blood Thy day adorn-  
ing:

It was the wit of Love o'erflow'd the bounds  
Of Wrath, and made Thee way through all those  
wounds.

Welcome, dear, all-adorèd Name!

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

For sure there is no knee  
That knows not Thee:  
Or, if there be such sons of shame,  
Alas! what will they do  
When stubborn rocks shall bow  
And hills hang down their heaven-saluting heads  
To seek for humble beds  
Of dust, where in the bashful shades of Night  
Next to their own low Nothing, they may lie,  
And couch before the dazzling light of Thy dread  
majesty.  
They that by Love's mild dictate now  
Will not adore Thee,  
Shall then, with just confusion bow  
And break before Thee.

RICHARD CRASHAW



C O M E C H R I S T M A S

*HYMN ON THE MORNING OF  
CHRIST'S NATIVITY*

It was the Winter wilde,  
While the Heav'n-born-childe,  
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;  
Nature in aw to him  
Had doff't her gawdy trim,  
With her great Master so to sympathize:  
It was no season then for her  
To wanton with the Sun her lusty Paramour.

Only with speeches fair  
She woo's the gentle Air  
To hide her guilty front with innocent Snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinfull blame,  
The Saintly Vail of Maiden white to throw,  
Confounded, that her Makers eyes  
Should look so neer upon her foul deformities.

Be he her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyd Peace,  
She crown'd with Olive green, came softly  
sliding  
Down through the turning spear  
His ready Harbinger,  
With Turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,  
And waving wide her mirtle wand,  
She strikes a universall Peace through Sea and  
Land.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

No War, or Battails sound  
Was heard the World around,  
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;  
The hookèd Chariot stood  
Unstain'd with hostile blood,  
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng,  
And Kings sate still with awfull eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peacefull was the night  
Wherin the Prince of light  
His raign of peace upon the earth began:  
The Windes with wonder whist,  
Smoothly the waters kist,  
Whispering new joyes to the milde Ocean,  
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While Birds of Calm sit brooding on the charmèd  
wave.

The Stars with deep amaze  
Stand fixt in stedfast gaze,  
Bending one way their pretious influence,  
And will not take their flight,  
For all the morning light,  
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;  
But in their glimmering Orbs did glow,  
Untill their Lord himself bespake, and bid them  
go,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And though the shady gloom  
Had given day her room,

The Sun himself with-held his wonted speed,  
And hid his head for shame,  
As his inferiour flame,

The new enlightn'd world no more should need;  
He saw a greater Sun appear  
Then his bright Throne, or burning Axletree could  
bear.

The Shepherds on the Lawn,  
Or ere the point of dawn,

Sate simply chatting in a rustick row;  
Full little thought they than,  
That the mighty Pan

Was kindly com to live with them below;  
Perhaps their loves, or els their sheep,  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busie keep.

When such musick sweet

Their hearts and ears did greet,

As never was by mortall finger strook,  
Divinely-warbled voice

Answering the stringèd noise,

As all their souls in blisfull rapture took

The Air such pleasure loth to lose,

With thousand echo's still prolongs each heav'nly  
close.

Nature that heard such sound

Beneath the hollow round

Of Cynthia's seat, the Airy region thrilling,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Now was almost won  
To think her part was don,  
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;  
She knew such harmony alone  
Could hold all Heav'n and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight  
A Globe of circular light,  
That with long beams the shame-fac't night  
array'd,  
The helmèd Cherubim  
And sworded Seraphim,  
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displaid,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes to Heav'ns new-born Heir.

Such musick (as 'tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
While the Creator Great  
His constellations set,  
And the well-ballanc't world on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel  
keep.

Ring out, ye Crystall sphears,  
Once bless our human ears,  
(If ye have power to touch our senses so)  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;  
And let the Base of Heav'ns deep Organ blow

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort to the Angellike symphony.

For if such holy Song  
Enwrap our fancy long,

Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,  
And speckl'd vanity  
Will sicken soon and die,

And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould,  
And Hell it self will pass away,  
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering  
day.

Yea, Truth, and Justice then  
Will down return to men,

Th' enameld Arras of the Rain-bow wearing,  
And Mercy set between,  
Thron'd in Celestiall sheen,

With radiant feet the tissued clouds down  
steering,

And Heav'n as at som festivall,  
Will open wide the Gates of her high Palace Hall.

But wisest Fate sayes no,  
This must not yet be so,

The Babe lies yet in smiling Infancy,  
That on the bitter cross  
Must redeem our loss;

So both himself and us to glorifie:  
Yet first to those ychain'd in sleep,  
The wakefull trump of doom must thunder  
through the deep,

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

With such a horrid clang  
As on mount Sinai rang

While the red fire, and smouldring clouds out  
brake:

The agèd Earth agast

With terrour of that blast,

Shall from the surface to the center shake;

When at the worlds last session,

The dreadfull Judge in middle Air shall spread  
his throne.

And then at last our bliss

Full and perfect is,

But now begins; for from this happy day

Th' old Dragon under ground

In straiter limits bound,

Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway,

And wrath to see his Kingdom fail,

Swindges the scaly Horrour of his foulded tail.

The Oracles are dumm,

No voice or hideous humm

Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiv-  
ing.

Apollo from his shrine

Can no more divine,

With hollow shreik the steep of Delphos leaving.

No nightly trance, or breathèd spell,

Inspire's the pale-ey'd Priest from the prophetic  
cell.



C O M I C H R I S T M A S

The lonely mountains o're,  
And the resounding shore,  
    A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;  
From haunted spring, and dale  
Edg'd with poplar pale,  
    The parting Genius is with sighing sent,  
With flowre-inwov'n tresses torn  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets  
    mourn.

In consecrated Earth,  
And on the holy Hearth,  
    The Lars, and Lemures moan with midnight  
    plaint,  
In Urns, and Altars round,  
A drear, and dying sound  
    Affrights the Flamins at their service quaint;  
And the chill Marble seems to sweat,  
With each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

Peor, and Baalim,  
Forsake their Temples dim,  
    With that twise-batter'd god of Palestine,  
And moonèd Ashtaroth,  
Heav'ns Queen and Mother both,  
    Now sits not girt with Tapers holy shine,  
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,  
In vain the Tyrian Maids their wounded Thamuz  
    mourn.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And sullen Moloch fled,  
Hath left in shadows dred,  
His burning Idol all of blackest hue,  
In vain the Cymbals ring,  
They call the grisly king,  
In dismall dance about the furnace blue;  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis and Orus, and the Dog Anubis hast.  
Nor is Osiris seen  
In Memphian Grove, or Green,  
Trampling the unshowr'd Grasse with lowings  
loud.  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest,  
Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud,  
In vain with Timbrel'd Anthems dark  
The sable-stolèd Sorcerers bear his worshipt Ark.  
He feels from Juda's Land  
The dredded Infants hand,  
The rayes of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
Nor all the gods beside,  
Longer dare abide,  
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
Our Babe to shew his Godhead true,  
Can in his swadling bands controul the damnèd  
crew.  
So when the Sun in bed,  
Curtain'd with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an Orient wave,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

The flocking shadows pale,  
Troop to th' infernall jail,  
Each fetter'd Ghost slips to his severall grave,  
And the yellow-skirted Fayes,  
Fly after the Night-steeds, leaving their Moon-  
lov'd maze.

But see the Virgin blest,  
Hath laid her Babe to rest.

Time is our tedious Song should here have  
ending,  
Heav'ns youngest teemed Star,  
Hath fixt her polisht Car,  
Her sleeping Lord with Handmaid Lamp at-  
tending:  
And all about the Courtly Stable,  
Bright-harnest Angels sit in order serviceable.

JOHN MILTON

### *MORNING HYMN*

Lo, fainter now lie spread the shades of night,  
And upward spread the trembling gleams of morn;  
Suppliant we bend before the Lord of Light,  
And pray at early dawn,

That his sweet charity may all our sin  
Forgive, and make our miseries to cease;  
May grant us health, grant us the gift divine  
Of everlasting peace.

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Father Supreme, this grace on us confer;  
And Thou, O son, by an eternal birth!  
With Thee, coequal spirit comforter!  
Whose glory fills the earth.

*Gregory the Great,  
Trans. by Edward Caswall*

## *HORA CHRISTI*

Sweet is the time for joyous folk  
Of gifts and minstrelsy;  
Yet I, O lowly-hearted One,  
Crave but Thy company.  
On lonesome road, beset with dread,  
My questing lies afar.  
I have no light, save in the east  
The gleaming of Thy star.

In cloistered aisles they keep to-day  
Thy feast, O living Lord!  
With pomp of banner, pride of song,  
And stately sounding word.  
Mute stand the kings of power and place,  
While priests of holy mind  
Dispense Thy blessed heritage  
Of peace to all mankind.

I know a spot where budless twigs  
Are bare above the snow,  
And where sweet winter-loving birds

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Flit softly to and fro;  
There with the sun for altar-fire,  
The earth for kneeling-place,  
The gentle air for chorister,  
Will I adore Thy face.

Loud, underneath the great blue sky,  
My heart shall pæan sing,  
The gold and myrrh of meekest love  
Mine only offering.  
Bliss of Thy birth shall quicken me;  
And for Thy pain and dole  
Tears are but vain, so I will keep  
The silence of the soul.

ALICE BROWN

*JESUS, THOU JOY OF LOVING HEARTS*

Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts,  
Thou Fount of life, thou Light of men,  
From the best bliss that earth imparts,  
We turn unfilled to thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;  
Thou savest those who on thee call;  
To them that seek thee, thou art good,  
To them that find thee, all in all.

We taste thee, O thou living Bread,  
And long to feast upon thee still;  
We drink of thee the Fountain-head,  
And thirst, our souls from thee to fill.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Our restless spirits yearn for thee,  
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;  
Glad when thy gracious smile we see,  
Blest, when our faith can hold thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay;  
Make all our moments calm and bright;  
Chase the dark night of sin away;  
Shed o'er the world thy holy light.  
*St. Bernard of Clairvaux*  
*(From the Latin)*

## A THANKSGIVING TO GOD

Lord, thou hast given me a cell  
Wherein to dwell;  
A little house, whose humble roof  
Is weather-proof;  
Under the sparres of which I lie,  
Both soft and drie;  
Where thou, my chamber for to ward,  
Hast set a guard  
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep  
Me while I sleep.  
Low is my porch, as is my Fate,  
Both void of state;  
And yet the threshold of my door,  
Is worn by the poore,

# C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

Who hither come and freely get  
     Good words, or meat;  
 Like as my parlour, so my hall  
     And kitchen's small;  
 A little butterie, and therein  
     A little bin,  
 Which keeps my little loaf of bread  
     Unchipt, unflead:  
 Some little sticks of thorn and brier  
     Make me a fire,  
 Close by whose loving coals I sit,  
     And glow like it.  
 Lord, I confess, too, when I dine  
     The pulse is thine,  
 And all those other bits that bee  
     There placed by Thee:  
 The worts, the purslane and the messe  
     Of watercresse,  
 Which of thy kindness thou hast sent;  
     And my content  
 Makes those and my beloved beet  
     To be more sweet.  
 'Tis Thou that crownst my glittering hearth  
     With guiltless mirth;  
 And giv'st me wassaile bowles to drink,  
     Spiced to the brink.  
 Lord 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand  
     That soiles my land,  
 And giv'st me for my bushel sowne  
     Twice ten for one:

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay  
Her egg each day;  
Beside my healthful ewes to bear  
Me twins each yeare;  
The while the conduits of my kine  
Run creame for wine.

All these and better thou dost send  
Me to this end,—  
That I should render, for my part,  
A thankful heart;  
Which fired with incense, I resigne  
As wholly Thine;  
But the acceptance, that must be,  
MY CHRIST, by thee.

ROBERT HERRICK





C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

O Christ, who holds the open gate,  
O Christ, who drives the furrow straight,  
O Christ, the plough, O Christ, the laughter,  
Of holy white birds flying after,  
Lo, all my heart's field red and torn,  
And Thou wilt bring young green corn,  
The young green corn divinely springing,  
The young green corn forever singing;  
And when the field is fresh and fair  
Thy blessed feet shall glitter there.  
And we will walk the weeded field,  
And tell the golden harvest's yield,  
The corn that makes the holy bread  
By which the soul of man is fed,  
The holy bread, the food unpriced,  
The everlasting mercy, Christ.

JOHN MASEFIELD, *The Everlasting Mercy*

"Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by  
prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy  
voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them  
friends?

For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

ALFRED TENNYSON, *Idylls of the King*

### A PRAYER TO DO THE WILL OF GOD

Most benign Jesu, grant me thy grace, that it  
may be with me and abide with me to the end.  
Grant me ever to do thy will And to desire that  
is most acceptable to thee and most dearly pleas-  
eth thee. They will be my will and may my  
will ever follow thy will and accord (agree)  
to it in all wise. Be there to me one willing  
and one not willing with thee; and let me not  
will nor not will but what thou wilt or wilt not.  
Grant me to die from all things that are in this  
world, and for thee to love to be despised and  
not known in this world. Grant me above all  
things desired to rest in thee and to poise my soul  
in thee. Thou art very peace of heart, thou art  
only rest: Without thee all things are hard and  
out of quiet. In this peace that is in the one  
sovereign everlasting good may I sleep and  
rest. Amen.

THOMAS À KEMPIS

From *The Imitation of Christ*

C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

*HYMN*

A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper he amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate,  
On earth he has no equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing,—  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is he,  
Lord Sabaoth is his name,  
From age to age the same,  
And he must win the battle.

And though this world with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The Prince of darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him,

## C O M E   C H R I S T M A S

His rage we can endure,  
For lo! his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,  
No thanks to them, abideth;  
The spirit and the gifts are ours  
Through Him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go,  
This mortal life also;  
The body they may kill,  
God's truth abideth still,  
His kingdom is forever.

MARTIN LUTHER

### *CORONATION*

All hail the Power of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all!

Crown Him, ye martyrs of your God,  
Who from His altar call;  
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,  
Ye ransomed from the Fall,  
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget  
The wormwood and the gall,  
Go, spread your trophies at His feet,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To Him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

Oh that with yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall,  
Join in the everlasting song,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

EDWARD PERRONET

## *GLORIA IN EXCELSIS*

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace,  
good-will towards men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee,  
we glorify Thee.

We give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.

O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father  
Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
That takest away the sins of the world, have  
mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.

C O M E N C H R I S T M A S

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the  
Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord.  
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art  
most high in the glory of God the Father.

*RICHARD DE CASTRE'S PRAYER  
TO JESUS*

Oratio magistri Richardi de castre, quam ipse posuit.

Ihesu, lord, þat madist me,  
And wiþ þi blessid blood hast bouzt,  
Forþeue þat y haue greued þee  
*With* worde, *with* wil, & *with* þouzt.

Ihesu, in whom is al my trust,  
þat deied upon þe roode tree,  
*Withdrowe* myn herte from fleischli lust,  
And *from* al wordli vanyte!

Ihesu, for þi woundis smerte  
On feet & on þin hondis two,  
Make me meeke & low of herte,  
And þee to loue as y schulde do!

Ihesu, for þi bitter wounde  
þat wente to þin herte roote,  
For synne þat haþ myn herte bounde,  
þi blessid bloode mote be my bote.

# C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And *ihesu crist*, to þee y calle  
 Þat art god ful of myȝt;  
 Kepe me cleene, þat y ne falle  
 In deedli synne neiþer be day ne nyȝt.

*Ihesu*, graunte me myne askinge,  
 Perfite pacience in my disese,  
 And neuere mote y do þat þing  
 Þat schulde þee in ony wise displese.

*Ihesu*, þat art *oure* heuenli king,  
 Sooþefast god, & man also,  
 ȝeue me grace of good eendinge,  
 And hem þat Y am holden vnto.

*Ihesu*, for þe deedly teeris.  
 Þat þou scheeddist for my gilt,  
 Here & spede my *praiers*,  
 And spare me þat y be not spilt.

*Ihesu*, for them y þe biseche  
 Þat wrapþen þee in ony wise,  
 With-holde from hem þin hond of wreche,  
 And lete hem lyue in þi seruice.

*Ihesu*, moost coumfort for to se  
 Of þi seintis euerychoone,  
 Coumfort hem þat careful been,  
 And helpe hem þat ben woo bigoon.

*Ihesu*, keepe hem þat been goode,  
 And ameende hem þat han greued þee,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And sende hem fruytis of erþeli fode  
As ech man nedith in his degree.

Ihesu, þat art *with*-outen lees  
Almyȝti god *in* trynyte,  
Ceesse þese werris, & sende us pees  
Witþ lastinge loue & charitee.

Ihesu, þat art þe goostli stoon  
Of al holi chirche *in* myddil erþe,  
Bringe þi fooldis & flockis in oon,  
And rule hem rithli *with* oon hirde.

Ihesu, for þi blessidful blood,  
Bringe, if þou wolt, þo soulis to blis  
For whom y haue had ony good,  
And spare þat þei han do a-mys. AMEN.  
*Lambeth Ms., Ab. 1430*

### HYMN

My God, I love thee, not because  
I hope for heaven thereby;  
Nor because they who love thee not  
Must burn eternally.

Thou, O my Jesus, thou didst me  
Upon the cross embrace;  
From me didst bear the nails and spear,  
And manifold disgrace;



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

And griefs and torments numberless;  
And sweat of agony;  
E'en death itself,—and all for one  
Who was thine enemy.

Then why, O blessed Jesu Christ!  
Should I not love thee well;  
Not for the sake of winning heaven,  
Or of escaping hell:

Not with the hope of gaining aught;  
Not seeking a reward;  
But as thyself hast loved me,  
Oh, ever-loving Lord!

E'en so I love thee, and will love  
And in thy praise will sing;  
Solely because thou art my God,  
And my eternal King.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

### *SALUTATION TO JESUS CHRIST*

I greet thee, my Redeemer sure,  
I trust in none but thee,  
Thou who hast borne such toil and shame  
And suffering for me:  
Our hearts from cares and cravings vain  
And foolish fears set free.

Thou art the King compassionate,  
Thou reignest everywhere,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Almighty Lord, reign thou in us,  
Rule all we have and are:  
Enlighten us and raise to heaven,  
Amid thy glories there.

Thou art the life by which we live;  
Our stay and strength's in thee;  
Uphold us so in face of death,  
What time soe'er it be,  
That we may meet it with strong heart,  
And may die peacefully.

The true and perfect gentleness  
We find in thee alone;  
Make us to know thy loveliness,  
Teach us to love thee known;  
Grant us sweet fellowship with thee,  
And all who are thine own.

Our hope is in none else but thee;  
Faith holds thy promise fast;  
Be pleased, Lord, to strengthen us,  
Whom Thou redeemed hast,  
To bear all troubles patiently,  
And overcome at last.

Children of Eve and heirs of ill,  
To thee thy banished cry;  
To thee in sorrow's vale we bring  
Our sighs and misery;  
We take the sinners' place and plead:  
Lord, save us, or we die.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Look Thou, our Daysman and High Priest  
Upon our low estate;  
Make us to see God's face in peace  
Through thee, our Advocate;  
With thee, our Savior, may our feet  
Enter at heaven's gate.

Lord Jesus Christ of holy souls,  
The Bridegroom sweet and true,  
Meet thou the rage of Anti-Christ,  
Break thou his nets in two;  
Grant us thy Spirit's help, thy will  
In every deed to do.

JOHN CALVIN

### *TE DEUM LAUDAMUS*

We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to  
be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship thee, the Father ever-  
lasting.

To thee all Angels cry aloud; the Heavens and all  
the powers therein.

To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do  
cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;  
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy  
Glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.  
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee.  
The noble army of martyrs praise thee.

C O M E C H R I S T M A S .

The holy Church throughout all the world doth  
acknowledge thee

The Father of an Infinite Majesty;

Thine honorable, true, and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost, the comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou  
didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou didst overcome the sharpness of death,  
thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to  
all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the Glory  
of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, whom  
thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints in  
glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people, and bless thy heritage.  
Govern them and lift them up forever.

Day by day we magnify thee;

And we worship thy name ever, world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without  
sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust  
is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted; let me never be  
confounded.

Anonymous

*EARLIEST CHRISTIAN HYMN*

Curb for stubborn steed,  
Making its will give heed;  
Wing that directest right,  
The wild bird's wandering flight;  
Helm for the ships that keep  
Their pathway o'er the deep;  
Shepherd of sheep that own  
Their Master on the throne,  
Stir up thy children meek  
With guileless lips to speak,  
In hymn and song, thy praise,  
Guide of their infant ways.  
O King of Saints, O Lord,  
Mighty, all-conquering Word;  
Son of the highest God  
Wielding his wisdom's rod;  
Our stay when cares annoy,  
Giver of endless joy;  
Of all our mortal race  
Savior, of boundless grace,  
O Jesus, hear!

Shepherd and Sower, thou,  
Now helm, and bridle now,  
Wing for the heavenward flight  
Of flocks all pure and bright,

C O M E    C H R I S T M A S

Fisher of men, the blest,  
Out of the world's unrest,  
Out of Sin's troubled sea  
Taking us, Lord, to thee;  
Out of the waves of strife  
With bait of blissful life,  
With choicest fish, good store,  
Drawing thy nets to shore;  
Lead us, O shepherd true,  
Thy mystic sheep, we sue,  
Lead us, O holy Lord,  
Who from thy sons dost ward  
With all-prevailing charm,  
Peril curse and harm;

O path where Christ has trod,  
O way that leads to God,  
O word abiding aye,  
O endless Light on high,  
Mercy's fresh-springing flood,  
Worker of all things good,  
O glorious Life of all,  
That on our Maker call.

Christ Jesus, hear!

O Milk of Heaven, that prest  
From full, overflowing breast  
Of her, the mystic bride,  
Thy wisdom hath supplied;  
Thine infant children seek  
With baby lips all weak,

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Filled with the spirit's dew  
From that dear bosom true,  
Thy praises pure to sing,  
Hymns meet for thee, our King,  
    For Thee, the Christ;  
Our holy tribute, this,  
For wisdom, life and bliss,  
Singing in chorus meet,  
Singing in concert sweet  
    The Almighty Son.  
We, heirs of peace unpriced,  
We, who are born in Christ,  
A people pure from stain,  
Praise we our God again,  
    Lord of our Peace!

*Clement of Alexandria (1st Cent. A.D.). Trans. by  
E. H. Plumptre*

## JESUS SHALL REIGN WHERE'ER THE SUN

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

From north to south the princes meet  
To pay their homage at His feet;  
While eastern empires own their Lord,  
And savage tribes attend his word.

## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

To Him shall endless prayers be made,  
And endless praises crown His head;  
His name like sweet perfume shall rise  
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue  
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;  
And infant voices shall proclaim  
Their early blessings on his name.

Let every creature rise and bring  
Peculiar honors to our King;  
Angels descend with songs again,  
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

ISAAC WATTS

### *THE HOUSE OF CHRISTMAS*

There fared a mother driven forth  
Out of an inn to roam;  
In the place where she was homeless  
All men are at home.  
The crazy stable close at hand,  
With shaking timber and shifting sand,  
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand  
Than the square stones of Rome

For men are homesick in their homes,  
And strangers under the sun,  
And they lay their heads in a foreign land  
Whenever the day is done.



## C O M E C H R I S T M A S

Here we have battle and blazing eyes,  
And chance and honour and high surprise,  
But our homes are under miraculous skies  
Where the yule tale was begun.

A child in a foul stable,  
Where the beasts feed and foam;  
Only where He was homeless  
Are you and I at home;  
We have hands that fashion and heads that know,  
But our hearts we lost—how long ago!  
In a place no chart nor ship can show  
Under the sky's dome.

This world is wild as an old wives' tale,  
And strange the plain things are,  
The earth is enough and the air is enough  
For our wonder and our war;  
But our rest is as far as the fire-drake swings  
And our peace is put in impossible things  
Where clashed and thundered unthinkable wings  
Round an incredible star.

To an open house in the evening  
Home shall men come,  
To an older place than Eden  
And a taller town than Rome.  
To the end of the way of the wandering star,  
To the things that cannot be and that are,  
To the place where God was homeless  
And all men are at home.

G. K. CHESTERTON

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A child is born in Bethlehem  
Nathan of the Shepherd-  
Bethlehem boy - young  
foots & hands - young  
Nathan.

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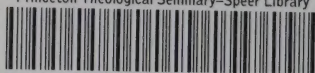


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